



National
Congress of
American
Indians

2011-2012
**ANNUAL
REPORT**

OUR AMERICA

*A Stronger
Native
America*



Our America – A Stronger Native America

“ We all know tribes have faced a difficult history. We are rising from harsh economic conditions to contribute to a more prosperous tomorrow. Tribes have been doing more with less for generations, and I am here today to outline a path to overcome our shared challenges – to lay out specific economic changes and improvements for our tribal nations...Ultimately... it will be the actions of Native people that can change their nations and communities.

Native people are the first Americans. Tribal nations are its first governments – one of three sovereigns recognized in the United States Constitution. And our America is a place where each member of the American family of governments contributes to a prosperous future... ”

**– NCAI President Jefferson Keel,
2012 State of Indian Nations Address**

About NCAI



**National
Congress of
American
Indians**

Founded in 1944, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) serves the broad interests of tribal governments and communities. As a representative congress of American Indian and Alaska Native tribes, we are united to advance policy and programs that:

- Protect and enhance treaty and sovereign rights;
- Secure our traditional laws, cultures, and ways of life for our descendants;
- Promote a common understanding of the rightful place of tribes in the family of American governments; and
- Improve the quality of life for Native communities and peoples.

NCAI is the oldest, largest, and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization. By advocating for strong tribal nations, we strengthen the United States of America.

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October 2011 November 2011



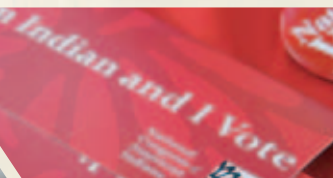
2011 Tribal Unity Impact Week



Native American Heritage Month;
Theme: Native Youth



NCAI 68th Annual Convention
& Marketplace: Footprints into
the Future – Portland, Oregon



NCAI Launches 2012
Native Vote Campaign

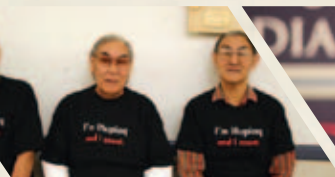
December 2011 January 2012



President Obama Signs Executive Order
on Indian Education and Tribal Colleges,
Establishes New White House Initiative on
AI/AN Education



FEMA Announces Support
for Tribal Ammandments to
Stafford Act



NCAI Joins Census for Release of
2010 AI/AN Population Brief



President Keel Delivers
10th Annual State of
Indian Nations Address

April 2012



DOJ and DOI Announce Settlement of
Breach-of-Trust Lawsuits with 41 Tribes,
over \$1 billion * Photo credit (2)



Special Rapporteur Anaya
Kicks-off Official Visit at
Embassy of Tribal Nations



NCAI Re-launches NCAI.ORG
Website

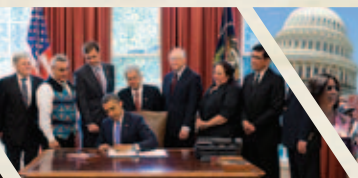


Larry Echo Hawk Resigns as
Assistant Secretary-Indian
Affairs; NCAI Praises
Legacy

June 2012 July 2012



Supreme Court Decision in *Salazar v.
Ramah Navajo Chapter* – Contract Support
Costs Upheld * Photo credit (4)



President Obama Signs
HEARTH Act – President Keel
Joins Oval Office Signing



Advocating and Protecting Native
Women Capitol Hill Rally



National Intertribal Youth
Summit * Photo credit (5)

September 2012



NCAI PRC Launches Genetics Resource
Center Website



Unanimous Confirmation of
Kevin Wasburn as Assistant
Secretary of Indian Affairs
* Photo credit (7)



U.N. Special Rapporteur
James Anaya Issues Report on
U.S. visit.
* Photo credit (8)



Native Vote Action Week:
140+ Events / 35,000+
People

December 2011



President and Board Members of NCAI Take Oath of Office



NCAI and Senator Akaka Team Up to Protect Native Women
* Photo credit (1)



Native American Youth - White House Champions of Change



White House Tribal Nations Conference

February 2012

March 2012

April 2012



NCAI Releases FY 2013 Budget Request



NCAI Executive Council Winter Session



2012 NCAI Indian Country Leadership Awards & Tribal Exchange Winners Honored



Senate Passes VAWA, Including Protections for Native Women

May 2012

June 2012



NCAI PRC - Montana Tribal Research Regulation Trainings



NCAI Honors Veterans and Native Service Members on Memorial Day



Indian Health Care Improvement Act Permanent; Supreme Court Decision Upholds Reauthorization
* Photo credit (3)



2012 Mid Year Conference - Impacting Indian Country through Unity - Lincoln, Nebraska - 7th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum

August 2012

September 2012



First Stewards: Inaugural Climate Change Conference



Kevin Washburn Nominated to be Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs; NCAI Supports Nomination
* Photo credit (6)



NCAI Launches Protect Native Money Campaign



2012 Tribal Unity Impact Week

NATIONAL CONGRESS of AMERICAN INDIANS

*Timeline
of Progress*
2011-2012



National
Congress of
American
Indians

OUR AMERICA



From the President of NCAI

Dear Members, Friends, and Supporters,

At the beginning of 2012, in NCAI's State of Indian Nations Address, I outlined a vision and path for a stronger and more prosperous Native America, a vision and a path for "Our America" as Native peoples, cultures, and governments.

Every day, we as Native people and tribal nations, continue to express and define our place as a rightful member of the American family of governments, in the patchwork of cultures that defines the United States and the tribal nations of America.

Over the last year, as NCAI has continued to unify the voice of Indian Country, we've acted to move "Our America" forward, together – as nations, as peoples, and as organizations.

Our America is a place where we strengthen tribal nations and as a result rise to meet economic challenges. It is also a place where our tribal sovereignty is protected and honored; where the federal trust responsibility has no political affiliation. Our America is one in which our rightful place at the ballot box is secure and we honor that rightful place through our civic participation. Our America, our Native America, is so many things to all of us and in our work, we honor that legacy.

In Portland, Oregon at our 68th Annual Convention we honored the legacy that was left for us by our ancestors and the leaders who came before us, those who have left footsteps to follow. We also reflected on the fact that we as Native peoples, as leaders and advocates, as nations, will also leave footprints into the future.

Our America is not only a vision of a better future. Our America has always been the strength of our traditional cultures and ways of life, the innovation of our governments and spirit, and the strength of our governmental relations today.

As an organization, the members of NCAI's executive committee and our board have remained vigilant and dedicated to the work at hand. The organization and our staff have continued to move this great institution forward, protecting our tribal sovereignty, advocating for our rights, serving the community, and educating the public.

In the pages that follow, I hope you will review the comprehensive work of the organization and realize the impact of our dedicated members, partners, friends, and supporters. We have strengthened our America, for today and for future generations. I thank you for your contribution to that effort.

Sincerely,

Jefferson Keel
President
National Congress of American Indians
Lt. Governor, Chickasaw Nation

NCAI Executive Board

President

Jefferson Keel, *Lieutenant Governor,
Chickasaw Nation*

Secretary

Edward Thomas, *President,
Central Council of Tlingit & Haida*

1st Vice President

Juana Majel-Dixon, *Legislative Council Member,
Pauma Band - Mission Indians*

Treasurer

W. Ron Allen, *Chairman,
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe*

NCAI Vice Presidents

Alternates

Alaska	Bill Martin, <i>Central Council of Tlingit & Haida</i>	Cynthia Ahwinona, <i>President, Nome Eskimo Community</i>
Eastern Oklahoma	Joe Crittenden, <i>Deputy Principal Chief, Cherokee Nation</i>	Charles Locust, <i>Assistant Chief, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians</i>
Great Plains	Robert Shepherd, <i>Chairman, Sisseton Wahpeton</i>	David Gipp, <i>President, United Tribes Technical College</i>
Midwest	Matthew Wesaw, <i>Chairman, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi</i>	Eugene "Ribs" Whitebird, <i>District III Rep, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe</i>
Northeast	Lance Gumbs, <i>Tribal Trustee, Shinnecock Indian Nation</i>	Randy Noka, <i>Council Member, Narragansett Tribe</i>
Northwest	Fawn Sharp, <i>President, Quinalt Nation</i>	James Steele, Jr., <i>Council Member, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of Flathead</i>
Pacific	Don Arnold, <i>Chairman, Scotts Valley Band of Pomo</i>	Leonard Masten, Jr., <i>Chairman, Hoopa Valley Tribe</i>
Rocky Mountain	Scott Russell, <i>Secretary, Crow Tribe</i>	Ivan Posey, <i>Council Member, Shoshone Tribe</i>
Southeast	Larry Townsend, <i>Veteran Services Officer, Lumbee Tribe</i>	Lagaylis Harbuck, <i>Chairwoman of Federal Recognition, MOWA Band of Choctaw</i>
Southern Plains	Robert Tippeconnie, <i>Secretary/Treasurer, Comanche Nation</i>	George Thurman, <i>Principal Chief, Sac and Fox Nation</i>
Southwest	Joe A. Garcia, <i>Head Councilman, Ohkay Owingeh</i>	Manuel Heart, <i>Council Member, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe</i>
Western	Ned Norris, <i>Chairman, Tohono O'odham Nation</i>	Bernadine Burnette, <i>Vice President, Fort McDowell Yavapai</i>

Executive Director's Note



Dear Members, Supporters, and Friends,

The pages of this Annual Report are full of important success stories. They're not just stories about the work of the National Congress of American Indians, they're stories about Indian Country's success. You'll read about the achievements that are only possible because of our unified efforts, guided by the enduring wisdom of tribal nations that has shaped NCAI's work from the very beginning.

You will read about our successful engagement with the Administration and Congress to ensure tribes can keep Native women safe and respond quickly to natural disasters, to expand economic opportunity through the HEARTH Act, and much more. Those efforts are about ensuring that tribal nations are honored as equal and important members of the American family of governments. The strength of this foundation is crucial as we prepare for upcoming efforts to protect the Indian Country budget and ensure tribes are included in key national policy reform.

You will read about our Native Vote campaign and the over 35,000 people impacted by Native Vote Action Week. While that effort is certainly about turning out the largest vote in 2012, it is also about rebuilding our Native civic infrastructure that inspired American democracy. As our Native youth population continues to grow, we envision Native leaders engaged in our communities and serving in elected and appointed positions at every level of government.

You will also read about efforts to prepare for the future. We re-launched our website, *NCAI.org*, and brought our new event and membership registration systems online as the first chapter in an ongoing effort to best serve our members using 21st century technology. We also deepened our focus on Native youth issues and expanded our partnerships with Native and non-Native organizations to better coordinate our investments in Native young people.

As you join us in celebrating these successes, I urge you to remember that this is just the beginning. We are working for a future where tribes are on the forefront of governmental innovation, where we continue to lead in land and natural resource management, where our businesses reach markets around the world, where we deliver quality education to all Native people, and we revitalize our cultures for the seventh generation.

We are deeply thankful for your collaboration in our effort to protect and advance tribal sovereignty and build a foundation for a better tomorrow for our America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jacqueline Johnson Pata". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jacqueline Johnson Pata
Executive Director
National Congress of American Indians



International visitors meet with NCAI staff to discuss issues facing North America's first nations and international Indigenous peoples.

The Embassy of Tribal Nations in 2012

In the heart of Washington DC's Embassy Row, the Embassy of Tribal Nations continues to stand as a powerful symbol of our unique nation-to-nation relationship with the United States. Each week the Embassy welcomes elected tribal leaders, tribal citizens, policy makers, advocates, and Indian Country partners from throughout the nation and around the world. The Embassy not only serves as headquarters for NCAI staff and operations, but is the nation's most prominent center for advocacy work related to tribal nations. Tribal leaders from Indian Country, and Indigenous leaders from around the world, have come to know the Embassy more and more as their home away from home.

Throughout the year, the Embassy of Tribal Nations served as a central point for tribal citizens, leaders, scholars, young people from all backgrounds, and the general public to engage in the work of NCAI and our members.

Over 25 groups formally visited the Embassy from states throughout the nation and over 15 different countries. In addition to a high-level meeting between tribal leaders and the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples,

James Anaya, sessions included educational presentations, discussions, planning sessions, and Embassy tours. The groups included over 80 students from the Close Up Foundation, Udall Foundation, Native American Political Leadership Program, Washington Internships for Native Students, and schools throughout the nation. International visitors came from Argentina, Australia, Canada, Colombia, Chile, Kenya, Israel, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, and Zambia, among others, to learn from the nation-to-nation relationship between tribes and the federal government.



Visitors to the Embassy view the picture of NCAI's founding members from the inaugural Convention in 1944.



A Vision for Our. America

Since NCAI's founders came together to form the National Congress of American Indians, our members have always understood that Native America and the first peoples of North America were best served by a unified vision and voice of Indigenous peoples and leaders.

This voice has been, and will always be, unified for a stronger Native America, one that we envision from our perspective – our traditions, our cultures, and our systems of governance.

In 2012, NCAI's members have carried forward a vision of "Our America" as Native peoples, organizations, nations, and communities.



President Keel speaks to media with tribal leaders and members of Congress for Tribal Unity Impact Week in support of the Indian budget, Native women, and to protect Native lands.

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Tribal Unity Impact Week 2011

The 2011 Tribal Unity Impact Week, held October 11-13, 2011 in Washington, DC, marked a unified tribal advocacy effort on several shared priorities for all of Indian Country:

- Protecting the Indian budget from looming national budget cuts;
- Protecting Native women from acts of domestic violence; and
- Restoring the Secretary of Interior's authority to acquire land on behalf of each federally recognized Indian tribe.

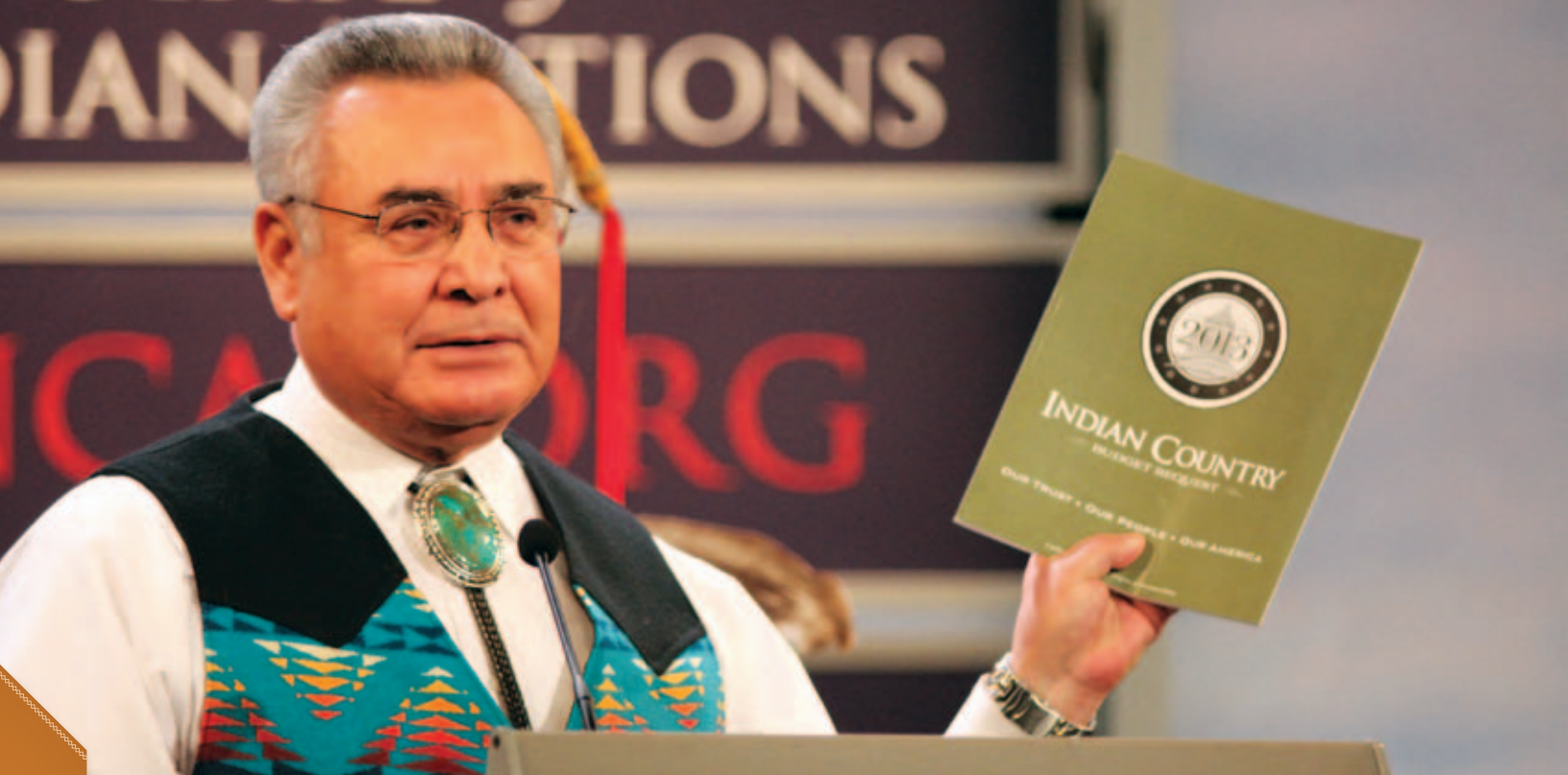
Each of these issues is critical to providing economic, governmental, and social stability in tribal communities. This unified outreach effort was also intended to remind policy makers that Indian tribal governments, while historically unique and differing, will remain unified on important issues such as these.

NCAI was honored to co-host this event with its partners, *the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians; the Alaska Federation of Natives; the All Indian Pueblo Council; the California Association*

of Tribal Governments; the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement; the Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association; the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona; the United South and Eastern Tribes; the United Tribes of North Dakota; the Navajo Nation; and the Native American Indian Housing Council.

Each of these valued partners contributed strong membership representation during this week of advocacy on Capitol Hill and helped set a tone leading into the next session of Congress that tribes will be unified and engaged at each step of the congressional process. This is important to note because when Congress is not working, tribes continue to operate and must continue to provide services and needs to their citizens.

The event was memorialized with a media event hosted by Senator Daniel Akaka on the grounds of the Capitol building, steps from where Congress exercises its lawmaking capacity each year. The event was well attended by tribal leadership and comprised of moving words of unity and cohesiveness in Indian Country.



President Jefferson Keel delivers the 2012 State of Indian Nations address, highlighting NCAI's plan for the Indian budget.

2012 State of Indian Nations Address

In a tradition that spans over a decade, NCAI's President delivered the State of Indian Nations address just days after the State of the Union delivered by the President of the United States. For a second straight year, NCAI hosted a live studio broadcast of the event from the Knight Studios at the Newseum in Washington, DC. The event was live streamed via the Internet to tens of thousands of people who watched throughout the country at State of Indian Nations "Watch Parties."

In honor of the 24,000 active duty Native service members and well over 100,000 Native veterans, NCAI's President Jefferson Keel was introduced by Lt. Col. T. Jay Hunting Horse (Kiowa-Choctaw) a U.S. Marine on assignment at the Pentagon. Throughout the speech, Keel outlined a vision for Indian Country entitled "Our America." With an important U.S. election eleven months away, Keel called on Indian Country to "turn out the largest Native Vote in history" – referencing the history of NCAI and tribal citizens securing the rightful place of American Indians

"Our America is where tribal nations create economic opportunities, where people come to us for the best jobs. It's a place where tribes are on the forefront of new technology – high-tech manufacturing, telemedicine, clean energy. Our America is where Indigenous peoples reach across borders and bring home economic opportunity for all Americans."

- NCAI President Jefferson Keel,
2012 State of Indian Nations

and Alaska Natives at the ballot box. The speech also focused on the immediate opportunities for Congressional action in the year to come and highlighted stories where increased government flexibility in tribal programs had led or could lead to greater opportunity and economic growth for tribal nations.



Representative Tom Cole (OK-5) delivers the official Congressional response to the 2012 address.

"Native people don't see the world in two and four year election cycles. We're focused on building stronger communities for generations to come. When we step in the ballot box, we want to vote for candidates who will stand with tribal nations to create a strong prosperous future. We are not mobilizing for one party or for one candidate. Indians don't just vote D for Democrat or R for Republican. For us, it's 'I' for Indian. We are independent voters and we will continue to vote for the candidate who is strong on our issues, and cares about our priorities."

- NCAI President Jefferson Keel,
2012 State of Indian Nations

Representative Tom Cole (R-OK), an enrolled member of the Chickasaw Nation and co-chair of the Native American Caucus, provided the official Congressional response. Too often, "the first Americans in the country are the last Americans. This needs to change. We are symbolically on a long walk back to returning our sovereignty," said Representative Cole.

Bipartisan leadership was on display, when following Cole's official Congressional Response, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Chairman, Senator Daniel Akaka (D-HI) and Senator John Barrasso (R-WY), Vice Chairman of the Committee, jointly addressed the national audience. Barrasso added, "I believe the message today is to tear down barriers and remove obstacles for success [in Indian Country]."



To watch a video of the 2012 State of Indian Nations and to read the speech visit
www.ncai.org/SOIN2012



A full audience views the address live from Knight Studios at the Newseum in Washington, DC.



A grand procession of local community members fills the streets of downtown Portland, OR, welcoming NCAI to the city.

2011 Annual Convention and Marketplace

Footprints into the Future

The tribes of the Pacific Northwest welcomed NCAI membership in memorable fashion on Sunday, October 30th, marking the start of NCAI's 68th Annual Convention and Marketplace with a canoe landing, a procession and parade through beautiful Portland, Oregon, ending with a rally in front of the Oregon Convention Center. The procession was fitting as NCAI's theme reflected on the footprints, the journey that Indian Country is making together, into the future, leaving a better world and stronger tribal nations for the next generation. The tribes and people of the region celebrated the return of NCAI to the city for the first time in thirty years – welcoming close to three thousand over the six-day proceedings.

The First General Assembly began with the gathering of tribal leaders, addresses from Congressional Representatives, reports from NCAI leadership, a panel of international Indigenous leaders, representatives from the White House and the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

In welcoming the attendees to the four days of meetings and events, President Keel stated the importance of tribal unity in reaching common goals, "Whether it's by creating a new school curriculum, building a stronger economy through clean and responsible energy development, creating better food options, or caring for an elder, we all are working together toward a new tribal prosperity defined by our culture, our people, and our natural resources."



President Keel and the executive board presides over the first general assembly.

Footprints into the Future (continued)

President Keel also reflected on the recent passing of Elouise Cobell, urging participants to “not only remember her as ‘Cobell v. Salazar,’ but as Elouise Cobell - wife, mother, grandmother, sister, friend - and an amazing Blackfeet woman.”

Exactly one year out from the 2012 elections, the Annual Convention also served as the launching point for the national Native Vote 2012 voter engagement campaign. Tuesday and Wednesday’s proceedings included a planning session for the 2011 White House Tribal Nations Conference, the 9th Annual Health & Fitness Walk, and a night of local cultural performances.



Watch Our Video Series from
the Annual Convention at
www.ncai.org/Annual2011

Keeping the Momentum: Keel Unanimously re-elected President of NCAI

The 68th Annual Convention was also an election year and members engaged in the long-standing tradition of electing by private ballot the President, 1st Vice President, NCAI executive officers, and Area Vice-Presidents. In an historic moment during nominations and speeches on Wednesday, President Jefferson Keel was unanimously re-elected by the members of NCAI to serve a second two-year term.

Fawn Sharp, President of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) and NCAI’s Northwest Area Vice President, offered Keel’s nomination. Well over 1,000 members in the nomination session gave Keel a standing ovation after the motion to accept a unanimous ballot was passed by NCAI’s election committee chair.

Elections also resulted in the re-election of both the First Vice President - Juana Majel-Dixon, Pauma Band of Mission Indians, and a co-chair of the NCAI Task Force on Violence Against Women - and Treasurer - former NCAI President W. Ron Allen, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe. Ed Thomas of the Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska was elected as the new Secretary of the board. Twelve Area Vice-Presidents and Alternate Vice-Presidents were also elected to serve.

Over the course of the 68th Annual Convention, membership came to consensus and voted in favor of over ninety resolutions.



Indigenous Nations Working Together Panel

Speakers on the Indigenous Nations Panel: Myrna Cunningham Kain (Member of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues), Roger Jones (Assembly of First Nations), and Mark Solomon (Co-Chair of the Iwi Chairs Forum). These international leaders explored the ways in which Indigenous nations can work together more closely, especially using the UN Declaration as a tool to guide their efforts. Although Jody Broun, Co-Chair of the newly formed National Congress of Australia’s First Peoples (NCAFP), was slated to speak, she was unable to make the journey. In a letter to President Keel, Broun affirmed NCAFP’s intent to “initiate discussion with [NCAI] on establishing a diplomatic relationship between [the] organizations, one that supports common goals and is consistent with UNDRIP.”

White House Tribal Nations Conference

Once again, NCAI held planning sessions during the Annual Convention in advance of the White House Tribal Nations Conference. Leading up to the week of tribal leader meetings in Washington, DC, NCAI convened briefings and phone conferences between national organizations and regional tribal organizations to collect tribal leader input into the development of the Tribal Leader Briefing Book, a resource compiled by NCAI and distributed at NCAI's tribal leader briefing meeting in advance of the Conference.

The Tribal Nations Conference on Friday, December 2, capped off a very busy week for tribal leaders and the Obama Administration. In the days leading up to the Conference, the Department of the Interior announced some important steps: Secretary Salazar named members of the National Commission Indian Trust Administration and Reform, signed the DOI consultation policy with tribal leaders on hand to witness the event, and proposed new leasing regulations to stimulate economic development. At FEMA, Administrator Fugate announced support for tribal state of emergency declarations through a proposed amendment to the Stafford Act. And

U.S. Transportation Secretary LaHood announced \$15 million in grants to improve transit options for American Indians and Alaska Natives on tribal lands. Additionally, consultations were held by agencies including Treasury and PACT Act Consultations by Commerce and IRS.

On the day of the White House Tribal Nations Conference, tribal leaders gathered at the Department of Interior for a full day of dialogue with the Obama Administration and federal agencies. Attendees first heard from Administration officials: Interior Secretary Salazar, HHS Secretary Sebelius, HUD Secretary Donovan, and Deputy Director of the Office of Budget and Management Heather Higginbottom. Tribal leaders then met with agency and Administration officials for the remainder of the morning and the Administration reported on findings from the break-out sessions.

The five break-out sessions were titled Creating Jobs and Growing Tribal Economies; Promoting Safe and Strong Tribal Communities; Protecting Natural Resources and Respect for Cultural Rights; Improving Access to Healthcare,



President Barack Obama and adoptive Crow family Sonny and Mary Black Eagle at the open of the White House Tribal Nations Conference.

Education, Housing, Infrastructure and Other Federal Services; and Strengthening the Government-to-Government Relationship.

President Obama concluded the third White House Tribal Nations Conference by announcing the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education. The initiative was included as part of the Executive Order on American Indian and Alaska Native Education and Tribal Colleges and Universities that Obama signed on the Friday morning of the Conference. The remainder of the President's remarks focused on the future of Indian Country after gains and efforts made since the last meeting held in December of 2010. Obama highlighted a list of promises kept during the past year and also emphasized the need to keep pushing to bring change to Indian Country.

"I told you I would bring tribal leaders to Washington...to develop an agenda that reflects your hopes and your concerns. And now, for a third year in a row, we have kept that promise. I told you that when I was President, we wouldn't just pay lip service to the idea of consultation. And today, we're holding every Cabinet agency responsible for working together with Indian tribes."

- President Barack Obama



Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar addresses Conference attendees.

"Secretary Duncan (and) Secretary Salazar, they're going to work together on this effort to prepare Native American youth to compete for the high-skilled, good jobs of tomorrow," said Obama in his remarks. "We're going to find ways to reduce the dropout rate. We're going to help students who've already dropped out re-enter the education system. And we're going to strengthen our Tribal Colleges and Universities. They are cornerstones of their community and they deserve our support."

NCAI compiled and distributed a report of tribal leader notes and federal government commitments made during the week of meetings and during the White House Tribal Nations Conference.

Once again, twelve tribal leaders from each of the 12 regions of Indian Country were invited to discuss directly with the President the issues facing tribal nations. Tribal leaders that participated in the meeting were Fawn Sharp, President, Quinault Indian Nation; Diane Enos, President, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community; Steve Ortiz, Chairman, Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation; Jefferson Keel, Lt. Governor, Chickasaw Nation; Nelson Cordova, Governor, Pueblo of Taos; George Edwardson, President, Inupiat Community of Arctic Slope; Ben Shelly, President, Navajo Nation; Richard Milanovich, Chairman, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians; Colley Billie, Chairman, Miccosukee Indian Tribe; Tracy "Ching" King, President, Fort Belknap Indian Community; Rodney Bordeaux, President, Rosebud Sioux Tribe; and Erma Vizenor, Chairwoman, White Earth Band of Chippewa.



Native youth participate in NCAI's conferences as part of the Youth Commission, dedicated to helping shape a bright future for Indian Country.

Impacting the Future

NCAI & Native Youth

A vision for a stronger Native America will be defined by how we help the next generation prepare for the challenges of tomorrow and share the opportunities of today. There are over 1.7 million Native youth under the age of 18, comprising 31.6 percent of the entire Native population.

Although many statistics portray the challenges faced by Native youth, NCAI is working to not only tell a story of hope and opportunity for Native youth, but also create an environment for Native youth to succeed and thrive. Native youth are the future of tribal nations, but many are not content to wait until tomorrow to effect change—they are serving as leaders and agents of change in their communities at this very moment. NCAI is there to meet those who wish to advance the cause and lift up those seeking solutions for their nations and their life.

Youth Commission

Established in 1997, the NCAI Youth Commission has been a space for tribal youth to come together and discuss solutions to the unique challenges they face within their communities. The youth commission has served as a space for Indian Country's young people to stand together, empowered, to inform Indian country's greater decisions regarding the future. Youth Commission members have often informed NCAI's general membership on various issues, informing key advocacy decisions. The youth commissioners also provide leadership development opportunities and provide a forum for national native youth networking.

Youth Commission Members

Randi Begay, *Co-President*
San Ildefonso Pueblo

Quintin Lopez, *Co-President*
Tohono O'odham Nation

J'Shon Lee, *Co-Vice President*
White Mountain Apache Tribe

Tyson Johnston, *Co-Vice President*
Quinault Nation

Jalea Walker, *Secretary*
Smith River Rancheria

Heather Farver, *Treasurer*
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi

Taylor Thomas, *Member at Large*
Shoshone Bannock Tribes

Danee Walker, *Member at Large*
Ho-Chunk Nation

Chad Martinez, *Member at Large*
Tohono O'odham Nation

Trenton Little George, *Member at Large*
Ho-Chunk Nation

2012 National Intertribal Youth Summit

In partnership with the Department of Justice, NCAI hosted the third annual National Intertribal Youth Summit (NIYS) on July 28 - August 2, 2012 in Washington, DC. Entitled "Young Leaders Shaping Their Communities," the week-long leadership development series provided 168 youth leaders from 53 tribes across the nation with tools, training, and ideas to take action in their communities. Throughout the week, participants discussed, debated, and developed ideas to address some of the same issues that tribal leaders are working to improve, including language preservation, health and welfare of tribal communities, and opportunities for the future.



Youth leaders participate in a NIYS session, discussing solutions to issues within their respective communities.

Tribal leaders, policymakers, federal officials, and other young leaders joined NIYS participants at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center to share their vision, goals, and experiences in Indian Country. Tribal elders kicked off the week by sharing words of wisdom about becoming a community leader and making healthy decisions. Juana Majel-Dixon, NCAI First Vice President; Juanita Ahtone, a Kiowa elder; and Joe Garcia, NCAI Southwest Regional Vice-President, encouraged youth to think critically about their actions and choices today, warning, "There's no right way to do the wrong thing." Later in the week, federal partners joined youth for an educational fair, where participants learned about internship opportunities, tribal-federal partnerships, and federal programs working in tribal communities. While in the nation's capital, youth leaders also visited some of its most iconic landmarks – the White House, the United States Capitol Building, the National Museum of the American Indian, and the Jefferson Memorial.

Participants returned home with new tools to prevent suicide and bullying, build awareness campaigns, and manage personal finances. Leaders also developed regional goals to stay in contact, improve their communities, and continue developing leadership within their peer groups.

Heritage Month

Native American Heritage Month, or American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month, is an important opportunity to celebrate the cultures, traditions, and histories of Native peoples. In 2012, NCAI in collaboration with the DC Native Public Relations Roundtable - representatives from national American Indian and Alaska Native organizations and government agencies in the Washington, DC, area – put the national spotlight on Native youth during Native American Heritage Month. In addition to coordinating educational and cultural events in Washington, DC, the roundtable helped bring national awareness to the Native youth experience by addressing the unique challenges faced by Native youth and spotlighting the success of Native youth through www.nativeamericanheritagemonth.org.





EVERY NATIVE VOTE COUNTS

Tribal nations are America's first governments and played a key role in inspiring and establishing American democracy, yet Native people were the last to secure their right to vote. Ever since NCAI's inaugural meeting, our members have cared deeply about the Native Vote. In 1944, one of our first resolutions focused on ensuring Native voting rights in New Mexico and Arizona. NCAI's Native Vote campaign has become the leading grassroots driven national campaign to promote civic engagement and protect voting rights among American Indian and Alaska Native citizens.

Native Vote 2012

In 2011, at NCAI's 68th Annual Convention, the organization formally kicked off the 2012 Native Vote campaign, calling on tribal leaders and advocates to get engaged early in organizing local Native Vote efforts. On January 26, 2012 during the State of Indian Nations Address, NCAI's President Jefferson Keel called on Indian Country to mobilize like never before and turnout the largest Native vote in history. While voter turnout was a top priority for this election cycle, more generally, Native Vote is committed to building a sustainable civic engagement infrastructure amongst tribal communities for generations to come. 2012 will long be remembered as a historic year in setting the stage for future efforts.

Getting Out the Vote

Indian Country responded to President Keel's call to action with a focus on the fact that over one million eligible Native voters were unregistered in 2008 – characterized as a "civic emergency" by NCAI in the lead up to Election Day.

In 2011 and 2012, Native Vote built on the organizing efforts of previous years and expanded its network of tribally appointed coordinators across Indian Country, while increasing educational offerings. Native Vote provided in person trainings at conferences, regular online webinars, and offered resources to help get out the vote at the grassroots level. Registration and absentee voting tools, including new online registration tools from Rock the Vote and Turbo Vote, were offered by the campaign.

NCAI endorsed a report released by Native Vote partner Demos proposing IHS facilities as voter registration sites and called on IHS facilities to implement the recommendations to ensure easier access to registration. As a result, many IHS facilities began efforts to offer voter registration and this will remain an ongoing effort of Native Vote in the years to come. Native Vote also partnered with nationally renowned Rock the Vote to help inspire and encourage civic participation among Native youth.

Election Protection

Facing a history of exclusion and disenfranchisement, Native Vote remained committed to ensuring that all Native voters have equal access to the polls on every Election Day.

Election Protection (continued)

In partnership with the Lawyer's Committee, Native Vote encouraged voters to report all inconsistencies and issues on Election Day to the 1866-OUR-VOTE hotline. NCAI's legal staff provided regular assistance with voter protection concerns and presented to audiences around Indian Country to educate communities about their rights at polling locations.

Education

Native Vote seeks to educate both voters and candidates every election cycle. The campaign ensured that Native voters were equipped and well informed to participate in the elections process, and also that candidates were aware and attentive to Native issues. Native Vote seeks to educate Native youth about the importance of civic engagement, and did so this year by partnering with Rock the Vote to develop and distribute a supplement to Rock the Vote's Democracy Class to include a history of the Native Vote. This curriculum was distributed to tribal schools and BIE schools across Indian Country.

Data

The ability to measure impact and progress is only possible with access to reliable, quality data. In 2011 and 2012, the Native Vote campaign made improving data and access to data on American Indians and Alaska Native voters a top priority. In partnership with State Voices, the campaign has been able to provide coordinators access to voter data software, and has been able to use the software to get a better picture of voter participation in Indian Country so we may better tailor future efforts.

Media Campaign

In 2012, NCAI and Native Vote called on Native media to volunteer the airwaves, the internet, and print publications to spread the word that “Every Native Vote Counts.” The national grassroots media campaign featured PSAs, print ads, and radio spots to help spread the word about voter registration and Native Vote. Native Vote coordinators, advocates, and everyday citizens across the country answered the call to raise awareness by creating and submitting their own PSAs, photos, posters, and more.

Online & Social Media

NativeVote.org became the central organizing hub for Native Vote, serving as a distribution point for resources, materials, and an online network of nearly 1,000 Native Vote community members. Additionally, the Native Vote Facebook page and Twitter, our primary social media outlets, experienced a dramatic increase in engagement and attention.

Partnerships

Native Vote is deeply appreciative of our partners during this election cycle. We were joined by regional intertribal organizations and national Native organizations who partnered to offer registration tools, educational events, and promote Native votes at their conferences. Special thanks to the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, Alaska Federation of Natives, Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, United South and Eastern Tribes, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, National Indian Education Association, National Indian Gaming Association, and the National Indian Health Board.

The success of this cycle’s effort was enhanced by our many partners outside of Indian Country. We deeply appreciate the following partners for the time they invested in making sure Every Native Vote Counts:

Native Vote Gear

This election cycle, the Native Vote branding was updated with a whole new look and feel thanks to our generous partners at Agency MABU, based in Bismarck, North Dakota. The Native Vote campaign supplied tribal communities, schools, and organizations with tee shirts, buttons, stickers, and posters featuring the new design, touting the campaign slogan "Every Native Vote Counts."

Native Vote Action Week

During the week of September 24, 2012, Native Vote organized Native Vote Action Week in coordination with National Voter Registration Day on September 25. As a result, over 140 events reaching well over 35,000 people took place throughout Indian Country. Working together to turn out the largest Native Vote ever, tribal leaders, Native Vote coordinators, teachers, Native youth, and organizations raised awareness and registered voters through drives, rallies, events, and Democracy Class sessions.

Rock the Vote- Rock the Vote is a trusted source of information for young people about registering to vote and casting a ballot. Native Vote partnered with Rock the Vote over the last year to help educate, inspire, and encourage civic participation and engagement amongst the over half a million Native youth getting ready to vote in the next few years. As a result, 2012 will long be remembered as the year that "Rock the Native Vote" became a regular saying in Indian Country.

State Voices- State Voices is a national network—built from the states up—that helps grassroots organizations win shared policy and civic engagement victories and build long-term power. Through our partnership with State Voices, Native Vote has been able to connect coordinators on the ground to registration, GOTV, and election protection efforts and tools in their respective states to help strengthen and enhance their local campaign.

Lawyers Committee- In partnership with the Lawyer's Committee, Native Vote has been able to provide important insight, training, and advice to grassroots coordinators in tribal communities about election protection and voting rights issues.



Jacqueline Johnson Pata delivers the Executive Director's report during the 2012 Executive Council Winter Session in Washington, DC.

Executive Council Winter Session

In the beginning of March, tribal leaders gathered together once again in the nation's capital for NCAI's Executive Council Winter Session. Throughout the session, over 25 cabinet secretaries, members of U.S. Congress, and agency officials addressed attendees. Throughout the three-day legislative summit, tribal leaders conducted nation-to-nation meetings with their congressional delegations and met together to discuss common goals and unique solutions.

"For the nation-to-nation relationship with tribes and the federal government, we've seen more opportunities become reality, than not. Contrary to the popular belief about the political climate here, much of these developments have come as a result of true bi-partisan efforts."

- NCAI President Jefferson Keel

In his opening address, President Jefferson Keel expressed the importance of bi-partisanship in recent achievements, continued cooperation in protecting and enhancing the rights of Native nations, and increased administrative flexibility for tribes. Native Vote was also an important focus throughout the Conference, with breakout sessions including a joint training with partner Rock the Vote.

Indian Country Leadership Awards

During the Conference, NCAI also announced the recipients of the organization's prestigious Indian Country Leadership Awards. Congressman Don Young (R-AK), Chair of the House Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs; Larry Echo Hawk - Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs; the American University's Washington Internships for Native Students (WINS) program; and the accomplished Dr. Eddie F. Brown of Arizona State University were honored at the Indian Country Leadership Award Banquet. During the banquet, the winners of the 2011-2012 Tribal Exchange Game from Wingate High School in New Mexico were also recognized.



South Dakota State Representative Kevin Killer talks about Native Vote during NCAI's 2012 Mid Year Conference in Lincoln, NE.

2012 Mid Year Conference

Impacting Indian Country through Unity

For the first time in history, NCAI convened a national meeting in Lincoln, Nebraska, returning to the state for the first time since the Annual Convention was hosted in Omaha in 1968. A Welcome Pow Wow on the grounds of the Indian Center in Lincoln began a week of meetings in which attendees heard from federal agency officials and tribal leaders, including Rick Sheehy, Lt. Gov. of Nebraska; Jodi Gillette of the White House; David Hayes and Hillary Tompkins of the U.S. Department of the Interior; Brendan Johnson, U.S. Attorney for South Dakota; Lance Morgan, CEO of Ho-Chunk, Inc.; and many more. Special events included an Economic Development Tour of the Winnebago Reservation, a Rock the Vote/Native Vote celebration, and a Sunrise Prayer Gathering. Twenty-seven resolutions were passed during the Conference.

7th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum - "Exercising Our Sovereignty: Using Research to Strengthen Policymaking"

NCAI Policy Research Center's Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum featured the work of tribes using research to advance sovereignty and community development. General Assembly presentations highlighted research related to Native youth substance abuse and suicide prevention, water quality and environmental health, and community-based partnerships with tribal colleges and universities. In a particularly memorable moment, President Cynthia Lindquist of Cankdeska Cikana Community College applauded tribal leaders for their work and asked them to enlist tribal colleges and universities into serving the educational, research, and workforce development interests of Native communities. During the inaugural Poster Session, 15 emerging and community-based scholars presented their research. Afternoon breakout sessions reviewed different models of tribal research regulation, celebrating the resilience of Native youth and Elders, developing meaningful community health assessments, generating research from a foundation of Indigenous knowledge and science, and designing community processes to consider genetics research. These breakout sessions featured the research of over 40 Native scholars, with representation from throughout Indian Country.

Health Fellowship recipient Lisa Begay (Navajo), finalists, and applicants meet in Washington, DC for a summer workshop.

The Wilma Mankiller Fellowship Program for Tribal Policy and Governance

The NCAI Fellows Program has evolved significantly over the past few years as the profile of the fellowship has grown. In addition to a growing reputation and exponential increase

in the number of applicants, in 2011, the NCAI Fellows Program was renamed in honor of Wilma Mankiller (the first female chief of the Cherokee Nation) and her outstanding contribution to Indian Country and tribal relations with other sovereign nations. The program provides an unparalleled opportunity for bright, young Native leaders to gain experience in policy advocacy, applied research, communications and development, and an array of other aspects of NCAI's work to make a difference in Indian Country.

This unique 11-month program has served over 40 young people, helping to provide young Native professionals with the tools and networks to take the next step into influential careers in Indian Country advocacy in the government, business, private, and civic sectors. NCAI currently hosts nine fellows across our respective departments with four additional staff having started their career at NCAI as a fellow.



2012-2013 class of NCAI's Wilma Mankiller Fellows (Tiffany Smalley, not pictured).

Inaugural Health Fellowship

NCAI launched the Native Graduate Health Fellowship in early 2012 as part of our commitment to cultivating the next generation of Native leaders. The Fellowship aims to address the stark disparities in Native health by building a pipeline of Native health professionals who are prepared to lead in formulating and promoting health policies and practices that address the unique needs of American Indians and Alaska Natives. A review committee, comprised of NCAI staff and key leaders in Native health, selected Lisa Begay (Navajo), a dental student at the Arizona School of Dentistry and Oral Health, as the inaugural fellow. NCAI also recognized two finalists: Deana Around Him (Cherokee Nation), a public health doctoral student at Johns Hopkins University, and Brandie Buckless (Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes), a public health graduate student at the

University of Minnesota. In addition to receiving a \$5,000 scholarship, Ms. Begay attended a summer workshop with the two finalists and a top tier of applicants at the Embassy of Tribal Nations in Washington, DC. Throughout the week, the students met with NCAI staff, other national Native organization leaders, and key policymakers to learn about Native health policy and tribal sovereignty. NCAI deeply appreciates the generous support of Robert Burnette and the Seventh Day Adventist Church in helping launch the fellowship.

"I want to be remembered as the person who helped us restore faith in ourselves."

- Wima Mankiller, first female Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation



Health fellowship workshop attendees meet with Indian Health Service Director Yvette Roubideaux at the Embassy of Tribal Nations. Inaugural Graduate Health Fellow Lisa Begay, bottom right.



Kicking off his official 2012 visit to the United States, UN Special Rapporteur James Anaya (bottom center) meets with tribal leaders at the Embassy of Tribal Nations.

UN Special Rapporteur Visit

On April 23, 2012, the Embassy of Tribal Nations was the venue for one of the first discussions between tribal leaders and James Anaya, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The four-hour meeting was part of a kick-off to the Special Rapporteur's official U.S. visit (April 23–May 4 2012) examining the human rights situation of America's Indigenous peoples.

Anaya visited the Embassy of Tribal Nations to hear from tribal leaders about the experiences and challenges they face today. The discussion, co-hosted by NCAI and United South and Eastern Tribes, included tribal leaders from across the country.

The Special Rapporteur is charged with the responsibility of gathering, requesting, receiving and exchanging information and communications from all relevant sources, including governments,

Indigenous people and their communities and organizations, on alleged violations of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to formulate recommendations and proposals on appropriate measures and activities to prevent and remedy violations.

During his visit, the Special Rapporteur held meetings and consultations with federal and state government officials, as well as with Indigenous nations and their representatives, in various locations across Indian Country. The results of this assessment were reflected in a report to the United Nations, presented on September 17, 2012. In the report, Anaya highlighted the importance of Indigenous rights in the context of extractive industries operating in or near Indigenous lands. He also underscored that consultation and free, prior and informed consent standards are the most powerful "safeguards against measures that may affect indigenous peoples' rights."



UN Special Rapporteur James Anaya discusses crucial issues with tribal leaders, gathering information about the position of Indigenous nations in the U.S.

The Special Rapporteur also suggested a “protect, respect and remedy” framework, from the “Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights,” should apply to advance the specific rights of Indigenous peoples in the same way as it applies to advance human rights more generally.

He further noted that, “there is a fundamental problem with the current model of natural

resource extraction in which the plans are developed with little or no involvement of the affected indigenous community or peoples concerned, and in which the corporation is both in control and the primary beneficiary of the extractive operation.” Finally the report suggested that “a new model more conducive to indigenous peoples’ self-determination is needed.”

Financial Literacy

NCAI has long advocated for and worked toward advancing financial capability in Indian Country. In concert with our on-going advocacy for financial education programs and resources at the federal level and our youth-focused Tribal Exchange program, we’ve expanded our efforts with the late summer 2012 launch of a major campaign, Protect Native Money.

The campaign will carry on well into 2013 and is the first step in a national initiative to raise awareness about the need for improved financial capability for tribal citizens, to provide access for tribes to programs and resources on financial education, and to organize networks and coalitions to support tribes’ efforts. The Protect Native Money campaign is focused on more urgent, shorter term events where consumer protection information and resources are needed by Native people and tribal leaders immediately. Starting in summer 2012 and continuing through next year, tribal trust settlements and individual class action settlements began distributing more than \$3 billion to Indian Country. NCAI provided consumer protection information to individual recipients and will continue to do so. The campaign will inform and engage individuals and tribal leaders through media and public outreach efforts.

In 2012, NCAI helped bring together a partnership of tribes, regional and national organizations, federal agencies, and others over the long term, to re-establish the Native Financial Education Coalition (NFEC). When re-established the NFEC will be a broad coalition focusing on building financial capability in Indian Country over the long term.

Advocating for Our People & Our Nations

NCAI advocates for tribally-driven policy solutions at the tribal, federal, state, and local level so that our people, our nations, and "Our America" – Native America – will continue to gain strength. While the array of topics impacting Indian Country has evolved since 1944, NCAI's core focus remains the same—enhancing and protecting the sovereignty of tribal nations.



Advocacy: A Year in Review



NCAI regularly convenes tribal leaders in Washington, DC to help facilitate advocacy on the hill and with administration officials.

NCAI has been the leading unified voice for tribal interests in Washington, DC for almost 70 years -- ensuring that the federal government upholds its trust responsibility to tribal nations and Native peoples.

Today, NCAI is actively engaged in national and international advocacy efforts, educational campaigns and programs, and tribal and federal initiatives to promote strong tribal governments and address the many human, economic, social, environmental, and cultural needs of tribal nations and communities.

Resolutions

NCAI members establish the organization's positions on issues that affect tribal nations and Native people through a member driven resolutions process. Resolutions are passed by NCAI members at our meetings and express the organizational positions on tribal, federal, state, and/or local legislation, litigation, and policy matters that affect tribal governments or communities.

2011 – 2012

During the 2011 Annual Convention and the 2012 Mid Year Conference, NCAI passed 93 resolutions on important issues. See pages 33-36 of this publication to review them. To research NCAI's resolutions, visit <http://www.ncai.org/resources>

Legislative & Issue Advocacy

Guided by our resolutions, NCAI advocates for legislation and policy that is critical to the nation-to-nation relationship between tribal nations and the federal government. We work to educate and inform all branches of the federal government, non-governmental institutions, and the general public about Native people, the sovereign status of our tribal governments and nations, our rights, history and cultures, and the efforts underway to enhance the prosperity of all indigenous people.

Capacity Building for a Stronger Indian Country

The growth and effectiveness of tribal governments relies on the ability of tribal leaders, citizens, and governments to respond to new opportunities and challenges. NCAI's advocacy efforts include developing initiatives and supporting programs that enable Indian Country to meet the demands of tribal nations to strengthen and enhance our economies, cultures, and communities.

Consultation Support

In 2009 President Obama declared his administration's commitment to fulfilling the consultation requirements of Executive Order 13175 -- a directive originally issued by President Clinton on November 6, 2000. NCAI has actively engaged in supporting and facilitating consultation between tribal entities and the federal government and is working to make consultations more productive for both. In 2011 – 2012 NCAI has continued to move the process forward and hold the federal government accountable for effective and comprehensive consultations.

Implementation

NCAI understands legislative and issue advocacy is only effective when legislation is enacted and implemented. NCAI has become a leading institution to support and facilitate implementation of some of Indian Country's most vital legislation and ensure federal programs are implemented with tribal input and involvement.



Juana Majel-Dixon, NCAI First Vice President and Co-Chair of the NCAI Task Force on Violence Against Women, leads a rally on Capitol Hill with tribal leaders and other members of the Task Force. The rally held in June of 2012 called for the passage of comprehensive VAWA legislation.

Safety for Native Women

For years, the NCAI Task Force on Violence Against Women and tribal leaders across the country have vigorously advocated for changes in federal law that would give tribes the authority to hold perpetrators of sexual violence on tribal lands accountable. Finally, on November 30, 2011, Senators Leahy (D-VT) and Crapo (R-ID) answered their cries by introducing S. 1925, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2011, which proposes several key improvements that attempt to bridge the gaps in the current system that leave Native women vulnerable to violent crimes of domestic violence and sexual assault. The most significant of these proposals is the recognition of the inherent authority of tribes to prosecute any person who commits domestic violence, dating violence, or violations of a protection order in Indian country.

On April 26, 2012 the Senate passed S.1925 with overwhelming bipartisan support, on a 68 to 31 vote. All of the key tribal provisions were

left intact. This was an historic vote because it is the first time since the Supreme Court's 1978 decision in *Oliphant v. Suquamish Tribe* that either chamber of Congress has voted to restore tribal criminal jurisdiction over non-Indians in any form.

NCAI membership and staff continue to work in a bipartisan fashion with both chambers of Congress to urge inclusion of the key tribal jurisdiction provisions in any final VAWA bill. NCAI will also continue to advocate for other statutory and administrative changes that would provide tribes with the resources needed to prosecute violent crimes committed against Indian women and to adequately serve Native victims.

"Pass a VAWA that protects all victims now!"

- NCAI First Vice President, Juana Majel-Dixon

Health Care

Implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) has progressed at a rapid pace over the last year. During that time, NCAI has continued to provide guidance and feedback to agencies on topics of particular interest for tribal governments, including state-based health insurance exchanges, Indian Health Service (IHS) and tribal reimbursement for veteran services, and enrollment in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program. In addition to offering guidance on implementation, NCAI, its sister organization National Indian Health Board, and more than two hundred tribes and tribal organizations submitted an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court, requesting that it uphold the permanent reauthorization of IHCIA no matter their decision in other constitutional questions presented. After the final decision, NCAI produced and distributed materials about the Court's decision and its impact on Indian Country.



NCAI has long advocated for the advancement of tribal health services.

Health Reform & Indian Country

NCAI, in partnership with NIHB, has also engaged in an ongoing initiative to inform American Indians and Alaska Natives about the new health care law. Together we hosted a national health reform training, launched a new consumer-oriented website (www.tribalhealthcare.org), developed new education materials for health care consumers, and presented four virtual trainings. Moving forward, NCAI will continue to support and collaborate with tribal leaders and governments in their efforts to maximize tribal opportunities within the law.

Tax and Finance

This past year, Indian Country successfully moved the ball forward in several key areas of tribal tax policy: the tax treatment of tribal government programs by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS); the tax treatment of non-gaming per capita distributions; and the government bonding authority of tribal governments. Through its partnership with the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, the California Association of Tribal Governments, the United South and Eastern Tribes, and the Native American Finance Officers Association, NCAI has managed to place tribal tax concerns at the forefront of national conversations with Congress, the IRS and the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury).

Last December, NCAI's tax initiative was able to spur completion of a Report to Congress by Treasury on the need to reform the Internal Revenue Code's restrictive requirements for tribal government bond issuances. This report signals the Administration's support for amending the Internal Revenue Code in favor of tribes on this matter, a critical tool to advance legislation that addresses this issue.

Also, the Treasury and IRS have engaged in extensive consultation with tribes about IRS policies which treat certain tribal government benefits provided to tribal citizens as taxable income. While the IRS and Treasury have yet to issue guidance on this matter, tribal leaders, NCAI, and its partners, have contributed extensive input on how tribal programs and social benefits should be treated by the IRS.

Tax and Finance (continued)

More recently, NCAI and its partners have been engaged in discussions with the White House, the Department of the Interior, Treasury, and IRS, on the tax treatment of distributions made from settlement funds and non-gaming per capita distributions. While our conversations have been encouraging, we await word on whether our interpretation of the tax exemption of such disbursements is agreeable to our federal partners.

For updates on NCAI's tribal tax policy, please visit the Intertribal Tax Initiative website at: <http://www.ncai.org/initiatives/partnerships-initiatives/ncai-tax-initiative/ncai>.

Economic Development

Tribal communities continue to experience challenging unemployment levels, lack of access to credit, and basic infrastructure deficiencies in access to water/sewage systems, electricity, broadband and a range of other critical services. Throughout 2012, NCAI called on our partners in the federal government to free our economies and create a more flexible federal government that honors the ability of tribal nations to determine our own future.

NCAI continues to support initiatives that will spur economic development within tribal communities including advocating for government contracting and loan guarantee programs, supporting broadband initiatives, and enhancing communication to tribal leaders and citizens on financing options, technical training and other resources available to them. We are also committed to urging federal agencies to work with tribes and tribal businesses to create effective tools for improving tribal participation in these programs. NCAI is also leading efforts to work with tribal leaders and the Administration and Congress to identify and remove regulatory and legislative barriers that prevent tribes and tribal members from achieving their maximum economic potential, building their economies, and improving their financial capabilities.

Throughout 2011 and 2012 NCAI participated in roundtables and ongoing conversations with federal agencies and the White House on business, finance, and regional development and agriculture matters. Additionally, President Keel joined in the White House Rural Economic Forum in Iowa. Legislation and regulatory shifts, such as new leasing reforms offered by the Department of Interior, the recent MOUs between the Department of the Interior and USDA, the successful passage of the HEARTH Act, and the movement of a Tribal Energy Bill out of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs all signaled important progress in advancing tribal economic development.

NCAI also provided education and outreach to assist tribes entering markets not only at the local, state, and national level, but also at the global level. In 2012 NCAI published and released a report on opportunities for tribal businesses to engage in the global marketplace through exporting.

Across the board, a vision for our America is where investments in tribal economies are dynamic and tribal nations can stimulate and implement innovative economic policy without barriers to economic development. Honoring tribes as governments and fully investing in modern infrastructure for Indian Country offer immense economic promise for tribes and the American economy.

Cultural Protection



NCAI aims to help tribal nations protect the traditions, places, objects, and languages that play a critical role in their cultural and spiritual livelihood. This year, the organization worked to strengthen the rights of tribes in these areas, encourage better enforcement of existing policies protecting Native cultures, and support the development of stronger policies with defined accountability measures.

Sacred Places

While the White House's recent proclamation of Chimney Rock as a National monument is a victory for tribes, there is still much more work to do in the area of sacred places protection. In keeping with NCAI's formal policy statement on sacred places, NCAI continues to advocate for the protection and acknowledgment of areas of cultural

importance, especially amidst an era of increased energy development on a national scale. Through active engagement and dialogue with federal agencies, the Administration, and Congress, NCAI continues to advocate for policies and statutory changes that would: ensure tribes are consulted early and often in the project planning process, encourage tribal co-management of sacred places, keep sacred information confidential, hold federal agencies accountable for upholding the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples regarding sacred places, and grant tribes a legal right of action to sue in federal court to protect sacred places.

Eagle Feathers

American Indians and Alaska Natives are subject to laws governing use and possession of eagle feathers and many other protected species that are integral to Native religion and ceremonies. In partnership with tribal leaders and practitioners, Indian organizations, and federal officials, NCAI is working to adapt current laws and regulations, as well as develop new policies, to better secure tribal rights to use and possess eagle feathers. Proposed recommendations include better cooperation between federal and tribal law enforcement officials, tribal control over investigation and enforcement, a review of improper sting operations, and creation of more tribally-operated repositories.

Native Languages

Native Languages are in a state of emergency and continue to stand as a strong priority within NCAI's work to protect Native cultures. Seventy of the remaining 139 spoken tribal languages could become extinct by 2015, and all of these languages need immediate support at the local, state, federal and tribal levels. Advocacy to enact legislation and policies to protect Native languages is ongoing. NCAI supports the development of Native language revitalization and immersion programs—as well as immediate reauthorization of the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act—to ensure that these highly effective efforts to increase language retention rates and ensuring preservation for generations to come are continued and adequately funded.

2011-2012 Resolutions Passed

NCAI members establish the organization's positions on issues that affect tribal nations and Native people through a resolutions process. NCAI resolutions are one of the policy mechanisms used to express the organizational positions on tribal, federal, state, and/or local legislation, litigation, and policy matters that affect tribal governments or communities. Full text of all resolutions can be accessed at:

<http://www.ncai.org/resources>.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED at NCAI's 68th Annual Convention & Marketplace Portland, Oregon

PDX-11-001 Opposition to H.R. 1904, Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act of 2011, Which Would Transfer Federal Land for a Massive Block Cave Mine that Would Destroy Native American Sacred and Cultural Sites

PDX-11-002 In Support of the Petition to Place Tribal Lands into Trust for Survival of the Membership of the Chilkoot Indian Association

PDX-11-003 Support for Maintaining Bureau of Indian Education under Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs in the Department of Interior

PDX-11-004 Support for Indian Agriculture Act to be Part of the Reauthorization of the Federal Farm Bill in the 112th Congress Whenever the Farm Bill is Reauthorized

PDX-11-005 Support for S. 1763, the Stand against Violence & Empower Native Women Act

PDX-11-008 Support for President Obama's Jobs Act Proposal Announced in September, 2011

PDX-11-009 Opposing Cuts to Title III Programs that Benefit Tribal Colleges and Other Minority Serving Postsecondary Educational Institutions

PDX-11-010 Opposition to Recent Regulations Changing the IHS Scholarships Program

PDX-11-011 Support for Full Funding for Indian Programs in Actions Reducing the Federal Deficit through the Joint Deficit Committee

PDX-11-012 Support for RFD-TV (RURAL TV) and Call for More American Indian and Alaska Native Programming on Television

PDX-11-014 Support of Assistant Secretary Echo Hawk's August 31, 2011 Decision to Allow Tribes the Ability to Govern Themselves and Determine Their Own Tribal Citizenship

PDX-11-015 Homesite Leasing, Owner Consent, and the Indian Land Consolidation Act

PDX-11-016 Support the Return of Former Attendance Documented "Non-federal" Boarding School Tribes to Admission at Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas

PDX-11-018 Supporting the Nanticoke-Lenape Museum and Learning Center

PDX-11-021 Endorsement for Eligible Telecommunications Carrier Designation for Standing Rock Telecommunications, Inc. and Future Designations of Tribal Telecommunications Regulators

PDX-11-022 Opposition to the Funding Flexibility Act (H.R. 2445)

PDX-11-023 Support for S.1262 Native CLASS Act

PDX-11-025 Support for Principles in Indian Education

PDX-11-026 Support the Immediate Completion and Distribution of the Department of Education's Report of Consultations with American Indian and Alaska Natives on Education in Tribal and Urban Communities

PDX-11-027 Support to Change Columbus Day, (2nd Monday of October) to Indigenous Peoples' Day

PDX-11-028 Supporting Tribes' Authority to Administer NAHASDA Funds

PDX-11-029 Support for Full Tribal Participation in the Columbia River Treaty Reconsideration

PDX-11-031 Mandated Flexibility of Tribal TANF

PDX-11-032 Full Federal Funding of Tribal TANF

PDX-11-034 Support for Federal Communications Policy Reform to Strengthen American Indian and Alaska Native Self-Determination

PDX-11-035 Support for ITMA Continued Funding by Department of Interior

PDX-11-036 Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Climate Change

PDX-11-037 Urge USDA to Reimburse BIE Residential Schools for Week-Long Food Service Programs for Students

PDX-11-038 Support for Native American Heritage Day

PDX-11-039 "Support for the Big Brothers Big Sisters Native American Mentoring Initiative"

PDX-11-040 Supporting the Creation of an Assistant Director for Native American Programs at the Office of Management and Budget

PDX-11-041 Recommending Changes to the Indian Land Consolidation Program

PDX-11-042 "Supporting the National Indian Gaming Association Principles of Sovereignty and Discussion Draft of Indian Country Amendments to any Internet Gaming Legislation"

PDX-11-044 Opposing The Proposed Liberty Quarry In Southwestern Riverside County, California

PDX-11-045 Support for Congressional Indian Health Caucus

PDX-11-046 Support for Alternative Funding Options for Indian Health

PDX-11-047 "Support for Federal or State Policies to Make Oral Health Care Services More Accessible through the Development of the Dental Therapist Provider Model Pioneered by the Alaska Dental Health Aide Therapist Program"

PDX-11-048 Support of the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development Native Business and Economic Development Policy Agenda and Collaboration to Advance Tribal Sovereignty, Capacity Building, Business Growth and Job Creation in Indian Country

PDX-11-050 Opposing Post Office Closures on Indian Reservations and in Rural Alaska

PDX-11-052 Support for Tribal Models for Disaster Planning and Protection Provided by Approved Plans of Tribal Self-Insurance

PDX-11-053 TANF – Equitable Treatment for Tribes

PDX-11-057 Opposition to the Elimination of Funding for Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians Education Programs

PDX-11-059 Calling upon the U.S. Department of Justice, the Department of the Interior, and Congress to Defend Tribal Sovereignty from Unauthorized Attacks by the National Labor Relations Board

PDX-11-060 Support the Nomination of Ohio Earthworks to become World Heritage Sites

PDX-11-061 Ensure the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Education Uphold Their Trust Responsibilities to Address School Construction and Facility Requirements for BIE schools

PDX-11-063 Endorsement of Support for the Reauthorization of the Native Hawaiian Homeownership Opportunity Act

PDX-11-064 Support for the "Tribal Clean Energy Resource Center"

PDX-11-065 Supporting Government to Government Consultation for Federally Recognized Tribal Governments

PDX-11-066 Support the Repeal of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Section 1603 (4)(b)

PDX-11-067 Alaska Native Restoration Commission

PDX-11-068 Supporting all Alaska Native Tribes Having a Dialogue with the Village and Regional Corporations Regarding Automatically Enrolling Members Born after 1971

PDX-11-069 Supporting Taking Traditional Alaska Native Lands into Trust Status with the United States Department of the Interior

PDX-11-070 Tribal Access and Participation in DHHS Technical Assistance Resources that Support Tribal Child Welfare Programs

PDX-11-071 Supporting the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes in Their Effort to Require that the Food, Machine and Chemical Corporation (FMC) Conduct a Pilot Study to Treat and/or Remove Waste from the FMC Operable Unit within the Eastern Michaud Flats NPL Superfund Site

PDX-11-072 Supporting S. 1684, the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act Amendments

PDX-11-073 Oppose the National Security and Federal Lands Protection Act (H.R. 1505)

PDX-11-075 Opposing the Elimination of Payments to Certified Indian Tribes and States' Abandoned Mine Land Programs

PDX-11-076 Support for Amending the Bureau of Land Management's Resource Management Plan to Prohibit Rock Climbing in Castle Rocks and Cedar Fields, Idaho

PDX-11-077 Support of the Provision of Health Care Services by Defining Benefits, and Requesting that Funds for Health Care are Based on Entitlement

PDX-11-082 To Secure through Prudent Means an Award of Executive Clemency for Leonard Peltier

PDX-11-090 Support a Priority Ethnic Designation of Alaska Native, American Indian, and/or Native Hawaiian in School Ethnic Counts

PDX-11-109 Support Legislative Amendments to Strengthen Public Law 102-477 Programming by upholding Tribal Management over Federal Agency Funds in an Integrated Employment and Training Program

PDX-11-110 Requesting Support for H.R. 1556 Santa Fe Indian School Language Amendment to Clarify Land Use

PDX-11-111 Directing the Department of the Interior to Place a Moratorium on Certain Regulations Restricting Probate of Improvements to Trust Land

PDX-11-112 Ensuring Compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act and the Protection of Tribal Nations Children

Mid Year Resolutions

RESOLUTIONS PASSED at NCAI's 2012 Mid Year Conference Lincoln, Nebraska

LNK-12-001 Support for "Plan B" Over the Counter for All American Indian Women Who Are Seventeen Years and Older

LNK-12-002 Protection and Preservation of Traditional Ceremonial Structures

LNK-12-003 Supporting the Bureau of Land Management's "Alternative B" for the Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan for Alaska

LNK-12-004 Urging the United States to Protect Areas of Cultural, Archeological and Historical Significance to the Miccosukee People in Its Efforts to Restore the Everglades

LNK-12-005 Support for Listing the Desert Nesting Bald Eagle as a Distinct Population Segment under the Endangered Species Act

LNK-12-006 Tribal Support for Designating the North American Bison as the National Mammal of the United States

LNK-12-007 Spectrum Allocation and the Low Power FM Radio (LPFM) 'Tribal Priority'

LNK-12-008 To Honor our Treaties, Agreements and the Executive Orders by Ceasing and Desisting the IRS Efforts to Tax our Tribal Government Programs and Services to Tribal Citizens which Interferes with our Tribal Government Relationship with our Tribal Citizens, Violates our Homelands, and Violates our Right to Tribal Self-Government

LNK-12-010 Urging IRS to Cease Unlawful Efforts to Tax Trust Per Capita Payments

LNK-12-011 Social Security Policy Recommendations

LNK-12-012 Presidential Appointment of EPA Regional Administrators

LNK-12-014 Supporting Expeditious Senate Passage of the Hearth Act

LNK-12-015 Request U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to Incorporate Veterans Administration Guaranteed Loan Program within HUD's Training Curricula

LNK-12-016 Supporting Additional Funding for the Maintenance and Operation of Dwelling Units Constructed with NAHASDA Funds

LNK-12-019 Supporting Department of Energy Alternative Fuel Funds to Support Compressed Natural Gas

LNK-12-021 Supporting Policy Amendment for Weatherization Funding Direct to Tribes

LNK-12-023 Federal Investigation of Observance of Federal Trust Responsibility to Protect Native American Ancestral Lands and Cultural Resources

LNK-12-025 Support for Energy Tax Credits

LNK-12-026 Head Start Recommendations

LNK-12-027 In Support of the Native American Program in the Workforce Investment Act of 1998

LNK-12-028 Support for the Reauthorization of the Special Diabetes Program for Indians

LNK-12-030 Support for Optional Medicaid Benefits to be Delivered Through the IHS Tribal & Urban Indian Health System

LNK-12-031 Include Key Protections for Native Women in the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization

LNK-12-033 Support for Bureau of Indian Affairs Acceptance of Excess Federal Properties for Indian Tribes

LNK-12-035 Support of NCAI's "Transforming Research Design in Public Health: Advancing American Indian/Alaska Native Scholars and Professionals at a National Level" Project

LNK-12-036 Opposing the Department of Interior Fast-track Policies of Renewable Energy Projects on Ancestral Homelands.

LNK-12-040C Support for the American Indian Veterans Memorial

LNK-12-041 Supporting the Establishment of a National Tribal Park on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation



President Obama signs the Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership (HEARTH) Act of 2012, joined by President Keel, tribal leaders, Congressional and Agency leaders. *Photo credit: Official White House Photo by Pete Souza*

Budget & Appropriations

Throughout 2011 and 2012, NCAI and tribes advocated for continued funding for tribal programs that support trust responsibilities in light of one of the most contentious years of fiscal debates. At the heart of this entire budget debate is the appropriate role and size of government. The authority to fund programs that fulfill the trust responsibility is founded in the Constitution, specifically the Indian Commerce Clause, the Treaty Clause and the Property Clause – and are clearly federal responsibilities.

With the passage of the Budget Control Act (BCA) of 2011 and sequestration scheduled for January 2, 2013, NCAI and tribes have focused attention and developed strategies to protect Indian programs from disastrous cuts. This work has involved high-level analysis and targeted reports beyond our annual budget formulation process and appropriations tracking. Annual appropriations bills will also be bound by the BCA spending caps for ten years, making the work of protecting tribal programs more difficult for the foreseeable future due to the competition with other domestic programs.

In the last year, NCAI coordinated efforts with national and regional tribal organizations to produce a comprehensive Indian Country Budget Request for FY 2013, provided testimony to appropriations subcommittees on the important tribal programs in the budget, facilitated the work of the Tribal Interior Budget Council, and worked with national fiscal policy think tanks and advocacy coalitions to ensure the promises made to Indian tribes and people are honored in the federal budget.



NCAI Staff lead on budget and appropriations, Amber Ebarb, delivers a briefing to tribal leaders.

Education

President Obama strengthened his Administration's commitment to improving American Indian and Alaska Native education by signing Executive Order 13592 in December 2011. The Executive Order established the new White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education, which is co-chaired by the Secretaries of Education and the Interior. In a similarly historic move, Congress appropriated \$2 million for tribal education agencies (TEAs) for the first time in history. Using these funds, the Department of Education has embarked on its State-Tribal Education Partnership (STEP) pilot project to build TEA capacity and promote increased collaboration between TEAs and states. Such initiatives are especially imperative in light of the most recent National Indian Education Study, released in July 2012, which found that Native students' academic progress has largely flat lined since 2005, with achievement gaps worsening in some areas.

Indian Country's recommendations for improving the education of Native children have been directly integrated into the Native Culture, Language, and Access for Success (CLASS) Act, which is currently pending in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Native CLASS Act firmly recognizes and supports the role of tribal governments as sovereigns in directing the education of Native students. As Indian Country's education bill, enacting the Native CLASS Act into law is NCAI's education priority. While NCAI continues to advocate for passage of the Native CLASS Act, reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) has stalled. Despite the delay, NCAI and our partners are continuing to work with Congress to ensure that when ESEA reauthorization is ready to move forward, tribal priorities are included.

Emergency Management

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Administrator Craig Fugate has conducted a series of tribal listening sessions during his tenure and NCAI has helped to facilitate tribal participation. The Administrator has also created a Special Advisor for National Tribal Affairs Position, a position that was recommended by the NCAI. In some regions, FEMA Regional Administrators have added tribal staffing capacity and increased tribal outreach and communication efforts.

Over the past year, FEMA has embarked on a campaign to support amendments to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Assistance Act providing tribal leaders authority to submit a federal disaster declaration directly to the President. In December 2011, the Obama Administration and FEMA publicly announced support for amendments to the Stafford Act to achieve co-equal sovereign status for tribes.

During September 2012, the House of Representatives passed the FEMA Reauthorization, including these important tribal provisions. The passage of the Stafford Act amendments were a key issue identified by tribal leaders during the 2012 Tribal Unity Impact Week and the FEMA reauthorization was a direct result of these advocacy efforts.

NCAI staff has also played an integral role in the design and delivery of emergency management courses by FEMA Emergency Management Institute geared to tribal communities and tribal officials. A recent addition is the tribal Continuity of Operations (COOP) course to ensure that tribal governments impacted by catastrophic events can continue to function. NCAI staff have attended and supported FEMA regional tribal conferences and tribal emergency management organizations.

Environmental Quality

NCAI is in the last year of a five-year cooperative agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency Office of Environmental Information. The OEI manages the Exchange Network, an internet and standards based approach for exchanging environmental data designed to improve environmental decisions. The NCAI cooperative agreement is to assist tribes in developing capacity and facilitate tribal access to resources and programs for improving environmental data management, advocate for tribal interests on Exchange Network governance and promote data management and exchange solutions that address the needs of all tribes. NCAI also has increased its communication and outreach in working with the EPA National Tribal Operations Committee (NTOC). NTOC is comprised of 19 tribal leaders and EPA's Senior Leadership Team, including the EPA Administrator, which meets to discuss implementation of tribal environmental protection programs for which EPA and the tribes share responsibility as co-regulators.

Farm Bill

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, (aka the Farm Bill) is a large and comprehensive piece of legislation that is set to expire in 2012 and covers many areas affecting tribal governments, such as food distribution programs, land conservation, forestry, agricultural outreach, rural development. Agriculture has been the second leading employer in Indian Country, and is the backbone of the economy for nearly 130 tribes. According to the 2002 National Agricultural Statistics Service report, American Indians operated 56.8 million acres of land and sold \$1.64 billion of agricultural products, including \$781 million of crops and \$857 million of livestock.

In anticipation of the reauthorization of the Farm Bill, NCAI is working with tribes and various tribal organizations to establish tribal agriculture priorities to be incorporated in the upcoming Farm Bill reauthorization.

Housing

In partnership with the National American Indian Housing Council (NAIHC), NCAI is working to ensure tribal housing conditions and needs are addressed by Congress and the Administration. In particular, NCAI and NAIHC worked collaboratively for the passage of the Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Home Ownership Act of 2012, (P.L.112-151 – HEARTH Act), which enables tribes to lease restricted lands for business, agricultural, public, religious, educational, recreational, or residential purposes without approval from the Secretary of the Interior. NCAI will continue to work together in prepare for the upcoming reauthorization of Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA) in 2013, and to make certain the implementation of NAHASDA enables greater tribal participation in the implementation of this important housing policy.

Land Restoration

Three years after *Carcieri v. Salazar* (2009) – the Supreme Court case that overturned a longstanding interpretation of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 (IRA) to limit the Department of the Interior’s (DOI) authority to take land into trust to only those tribes “under Federal jurisdiction” on June 8, 1934 – there are at least thirteen pending cases where tribes and the Secretary of the Interior are under challenge. Further, there is harassment litigation against tribes who were on treaty reservations in 1934.

This past year, in *Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Potawatami v. Patchak* (2012), the Supreme Court disregarded decades of interpretation of the Quiet Title Act (QTA) to permit retroactive challenges to the status of federal Indian trust land many years after it has been placed in trust. The Supreme Court also broadened the scope of persons eligible to challenge land into trust decisions under the IRA. This decision opens the door to broad challenges to tribal trust land status by any party asserting a general interest. Collectively, these legal challenges push a restrictive interpretation on how the Administration may protect tribal interests, which is in direct conflict with broad federal constitutional jurisdiction over Indian affairs.

NCAI and its membership continue to urge Congress to support legislation that will fully restore Interior’s authority to take land into trust for all Indian tribes. Currently, there are two House bills (H.R. 1291 and H.R. 1234) and one Senate bill (S. 676) that propose legislative fixes to the *Carcieri* decision. The Senate bill has been unanimously approved by the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

NCAI, along with its partners and member tribes, have actively met with the White House and the Department of the Interior to discuss possible administrative solutions as well. NCAI fully intends to keep pushing for a favorable resolution on behalf of Indian tribes on this issue, both legislatively and administratively.

Natural Resources

Sustaining our natural resources remains a vital and integral part of tribal self-determination and sufficiency for our communities, cultures, and economies. NCAI works diligently in partnership with other organizations that share similar beliefs.

We continue to build upon our partnership with Our Natural Resources (ONR) and in the past year submitted a proposal on ONR’s behalf to support the ongoing efforts of the coalition. NCAI and ONR were active participants in a number of important events over the last year including the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs hearing, “Stewards of our Homelands: The Role of Native Peoples in Environmental Protection.” In July, NCAI was a proud sponsor of the First Stewards Symposium on Climate Change that brought together Indigenous communities to share climate adaptation strategies from coastal ecosystems nationwide. NCAI continues to advocate for parity in federal natural resource assistance programs like the Forest Legacy Program and the Soil and Water Resource Conservation Act.

NCAI also remained active on international issues and, in collaboration and partnership with the Assembly of First Nations, worked to support responsible energy development by Native governments across national boundaries.

Natural Resources (continued)

At the 2011 Mid Year Conference, NCAI members passed a resolution in opposition to the Keystone XL Pipeline project outlining how the pipeline would threaten water aquifers, water ways, cultural sites, agricultural lands, animal life, public water sources, and other resources vital to the peoples of the region in which the pipeline is proposed. Since the passage of that resolution, NCAI has actively promoted consultation and responsible energy development, including active participation with tribes opposing the Bureau of Land Management efforts to impose hydraulic fracturing regulations on tribal lands.

Telecommunications

The United States continues to be the leader in wireless broadband technology and innovation. Development of powerful devices like smartphones and tablets has steadily increased the demand for finite spectrum resources. While the country begins targeted funding for wireless broadband build out into currently unserved and underserved areas, NCAI has worked to ensure tribes become active participants in the Connect America Fund (CAF) transition, and implementation of the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet).

Development of Mobility Fund and Tribal Mobility Fund auctions has been the result of tribal recommendations proposed in the National Broadband Plan (NBP), and tribes have a unique opportunity to develop vital wireless telecommunications infrastructure. NCAI has also worked to ensure that if tribes do not wish to develop their own wireless services, they are empowered to negotiate the terms of service with communications providers coming onto tribal lands. NCAI continues to advocate for the expansion of a tribal priority to include tribal access to commercial spectrum licenses, and enforcement of the CAF Tribal Engagement Provisions to include tribes in the planning and build out of communications services by commercial industry entities on tribal lands.

Additionally implementation of FirstNet provides an unprecedented effort to deploy a nationwide public safety network, and holds promise to increase public safety communications on tribal lands. FirstNet will allow public safety officials to communicate with each other across agencies and jurisdictions on a single nationwide network. NCAI and our partners will continue to work with the FirstNet Authority to ensure tribal inclusion in the planning and build out of this national public safety network over the next decade.

Transportation

In July, President Obama signed, MAP-21, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (P.L. 112-141), a two-year authorization for transportation programs within the Department of Transportation. It had been over four years since the prior transportation authorization, Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). NCAI worked jointly with the Intertribal Transportation Association by establishing an NCAI-ITA Joint Task Force. This Joint Task Force prepared and advocated for tribal transportation priorities for the MAP-21. With the political and budget climate since the last authorization, the Joint Task Force strived to ensure that MAP-21 would continue to build upon the progress made in SAFETEA-LU. In 2013, NCAI will continue our work with tribes to prepare for the upcoming transportation authorization when MAP-21 expires in 2014.

Tribal Homeland Security

NCAI continues to conduct Annual Convention and Mid-Year Conference sessions involving Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officials to discuss current federal laws and regulations governing international boundaries and use of tribal identification cards for boarding domestic flights, border crossing, and other related matters. Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano conducted a tribal leaders listening session at the NCAI Executive Council Winter Session and expressed support for a follow up to the 2006 International Indigenous Cross Border Security Summit in Cornwall, Ontario, cosponsored by NCAI. Planning for the second summit is underway. NCAI and tribal leaders were successful in seeking a separate DHS tribal grant program because state-managed programs funded by DHS failed to include tribal governments and communities. NCAI is working to prevent the proposed reorganization of the grant program, which would eliminate the tribal specific program.

Support of American Indian and Alaska Native Veteran Programs and Issues

As an organization, NCAI expresses its gratitude for the Native veterans who served in the military by assisting veterans in obtaining fair and just access to the benefits from their service to this country, ensuring those solemn promises are fulfilled.



NCAI works to ensure that our Native service men and women are honored and have access to the services and resources that they need. *Photo credit: CC - Donovan Shortey*

Inadequate health care is the most prevalent problem due to budgetary shortfalls experienced by the Indian Health Service and Veterans Health Administration providers. Veterans living on reservations and in tribal communities often reside considerable distances from clinics and medical centers, compounding the cost to seek treatment through travel costs and lodging expenses.

NCAI has worked tirelessly to change this situation. Over the last year, NCAI has provided extensive testimony to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on the needs of Native veterans and worked with various organizations and agencies towards the implementation of Tribal Veterans Treatment Courts as an important component of tribal government judicial systems. When appropriate, these courts offer prosecutorial discretion and flexible punishment alternatives geared to rehabilitate veterans whose criminal behavior is likely attributed to post traumatic stress disorder, which is often exacerbated by traumatic brain injury.

Native veterans are underserved by non-Native veteran services organizations that are the only authorized entities for this purpose and certify Veteran Service Officers. NCAI has been working to seek corrective legislation to authorize certification of tribal Veteran Service Officers providers to better service Native veterans throughout Indian Country.

Service to Community

"...In order to secure to ourselves and our descendants the rights and
benefits the traditional laws of our people to which we are entitled
to as sovereign nations..." - *Preamble, NCAI Constitution, 1944*



Tribal Sovereignty Protection Initiative

Tribal leaders formed the Tribal Sovereignty Protection Initiative (TSPI) in September of 2001 in recognition of the fact that protection of tribal sovereignty is fundamental to the continued existence of tribal nations as distinct peoples and cultures. Two central components of the TSPI continue to flourish today: the Tribal Supreme Court Project and the NCAI Project on the Judiciary (originally known as the Federal Judicial Selection Project).

The Tribal Supreme Court Project

A collaboration between NCAI and the Native American Rights Fund, the Tribal Supreme Court Project was formed to promote coordination and improve strategy on litigation that may affect the rights of Indian tribes and to strengthen tribal advocacy efforts before the U.S. Supreme Court. The highlights of the 2011-2012 term included big wins for tribes in the areas of health care and contract support costs.

In *Salazar v. Ramah Navajo Chapter* (No. 11-551) (2012), Indian Country scored its first victory before the Roberts Court. The Court held that the United States must pay in full each Tribe's contract support costs (administrative costs incurred by tribes who enter into contracts with the United States under the Indian Self-Determination Act and Education Assistance Act). Only days later, the Court issued another positive decision for tribes, this time in the health care arena. On June 28, 2012, in a 5-4 decision the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in *State of Florida, et al. v. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, et al.* (No. 11-393; 11-400), which affirmed the permanent reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) which passed along with the ACA. NCAI jointly submitted amicus briefs with several other tribal organizations in both cases.

Project on the Judiciary

With the generous support of the Open Society Institute, the NCAI Project on the Judiciary has become a comprehensive judicial diversity project that primarily focuses on getting Native people appointed to the federal bench and ensuring that the federal judiciary is made up of individuals who understand tribal sovereignty and the role of federal courts in Indian Country.

This year, the Project served as a clearinghouse for all Native people interested in pursuing a federal judgeship. In addition to responding to potential candidates' questions regarding the selection process, the Project has continued its promotion of a step-by-step guide for potential federal judicial candidates, *The Path to the Federal Bench*, to help them better understand the judicial selection process. On April 19, 2012, NCAI facilitated a CLE panel presentation at the 2012 Federal Bar Association (FBA) Indian Law Conference on *The Path to the Federal Bench* with a focus on judicial clerkships as a stepping-stone for young Native lawyers and law students. Two prominent federal judges and two accomplished Native judicial clerks provided informed perspectives on the path to becoming a judicial law clerk and a federal judge.

Additionally, in November 2011, the Project arranged for former and current 9th Circuit judges to meet with tribal leaders at NCAI's Annual Convention in Portland, Oregon. Similarly, the Project coordinated the attendance of Chief Judge Riley from the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals at NCAI's 2012 Mid Year Conference in Lincoln, Nebraska. The importance of these events cannot be overstated. The federal judiciary is regularly tasked with making decisions that have a lasting impact on the day-to-day life of Native peoples, so it is critically important that federal judges take the time to visit tribal communities and learn about the unique legal relationship between the federal government and tribal nations.



Research partners from the Suquamish Tribe's Healing of the Canoe substance abuse prevention project and the Crow Nation's Apsaaloke Water and Wastewater Authority look on as NCAI Board Member Joe Garcia reflects on their presentations at the 7th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum

NCAI Policy Research Center

Advancing Ethical Research to Support Tribal Leader Decision-Making



The NCAI Policy Research Center (PRC) was established in 2003 with a vision of supporting Indian Country in shaping its own future by generating **tribally-driven research** through serving our mission:

"To provide tribal leaders with the best available knowledge to make strategically proactive policy decisions in a framework of Native wisdom that positively impact the future of Native peoples."

Over the last nine years, the PRC has grown from a staff of one to a staff of six who are leading a national strategy and working on projects accounting for an annual budget of over \$1 million, the majority of which comes from federal and private grants.

To serve our mission, we identified four areas of work in our **DoRSaL** Strategy, that include:

1. **Data Quality & Access;**
2. **Research Regulation & Impact;**
3. **Synthesis, Dissemination, & Translation; and**
4. **Leadership & Network Development**

In the last year, our work has been developed at the NCAI headquarters in Washington, DC and serves tribal nations and Native peoples throughout the nation. In addition to ensuring our work reaches across Indian Country, our measures of success include: providing baseline demographic data; identifying promising tribal practices and models to share with other tribes, federal partners, and research organizations from a strengths-based vantage point; strengthening tribal leaders' engagement with research; documenting how culture matters in policy and research contexts; and increasing the number of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) scholars pursuing research careers. Our key accomplishments for 2011-2012 are as follows:

❖ *Providing Data and Policy Analysis*

January 2012 – Delivered Feature Presentation at Release of the Census 2010 AI/AN Population Brief.

The presentation was part of a webinar hosted by the National Museum of the American Indian that posted close to 2,000 unique views. Our work was featured in several major news stories in print and online. This work extended the Indian Country Counts campaign to encourage Native people to participate in the Census and aimed to raise several ongoing data quality issues with key Census officials.

January 2012 – January 2012 - Contributed to the Development of 2013 Indian Country Budget Request.

In close partnership with NCAI legislative staff, and a range of national partners, developed analyses and facilitated the production of this document, which serves as a key tool for national advocacy and education.

June 2012 – Released Tribal Insights Brief on Link between Higher Education and Workforce.

Prepared a brief featuring six case vignettes from tribes and Native communities detailing innovative approaches to encouraging tribal citizens to pursue higher education and bolster tribal workforce development, which built on discussions at a 2011 NCAI Annual Convention breakout session.

July 2012 – Presented at the National Center for Education Statistics STATS-DC Data Conference.

The PRC partnered with the National Indian Education Association to report data quality challenges and provide information on tribal data needs. Among the challenges with education data are the inability to disaggregate data by tribe; the lack of coordination across federal databases; inadequate sampling and inclusion of Native students; and the undercounting of Native students.

❖ *Strengthening Research Training and Federal Monitoring in Native Contexts*

October 2011 – Submitted Comments on Research Protections. NCAI PRC staff submitted comments on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Human Research Protections request for comments on proposed rulemaking on reducing researcher burden. NCAI comments called for: (1) oversight in instances where informed consent processes must consider both individual and tribal consent; (2) oversight of any proposed secondary uses or analyses of data collected; and (3) inclusion of tribal IRBs and other research review processes in the revised regulations.

December 2011 - Partnered with UC Davis to deliver research regulation curriculum training with Northern California tribal and health council members. Provided an abridged virtual training for tribal and health council members with university partners tailored to address specific interests in tribal research protocols, research ethics, and effective research partnerships.

April 2012 – Provided Testimony on Protecting Small Populations at the National Committee on Vital Health Statistics. Presented information for Committee members who make recommendations to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regarding insights from tribal communities related to protecting small populations and ensuring research benefits for Native people.

April & May 2012 – Delivered Research Curriculum Training to Three Montana Tribes. Through a partnership with Montana State University's Center for Native Health Partnerships and funding from the National Institutes of Health, delivered the NCAI PRC research curriculum training entitled, *Research that Benefits Native People: A Guide for Tribal Leaders*, to the Chippewa Cree Tribe of Rocky Boy Montana, the Crow Tribe, and the Blackfeet Nation, at no cost to the tribes.

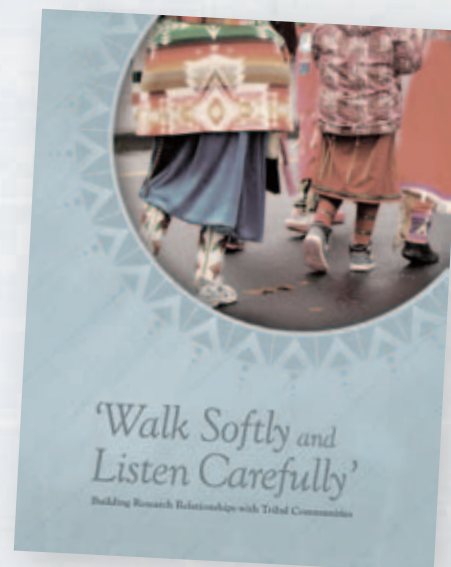
June 2012 – Hosted the 7th Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum.

The 2012 Forum was held in Lincoln, Nebraska, and its theme, “Exercising Our Sovereignty: Using Research to Strengthen Policymaking” highlighted the value of research in Native communities. For the first time, the Forum offered a poster session featuring the work of Native students and scholars.

❖ ***Developing Tools to Support Tribally- and Community-Based Research Processes***

November 2011 – Developed Research Project Protocols and Tools.

Continued our national study of community-academic partnerships funded by the Native American Research Centers for Health. The project developed a series of protocols to guide our partnership that we are disseminating through the project website (narch.ncaiprc.org) in the hopes they might inform the work of tribes in research partnership. We also published our first peer-reviewed journal article as a team entitled, “Evaluating Community-Based Participatory Research to Improve Community-Partnered Science and Community Health.”



September 2012 – Launched the American Indian & Alaska Native Genetics Resource Center.

The Center (genetics.ncai.org) was created in response to tribal leaders’ requests for more information on genetics research. Users can find resources such as information on the basics of genetics research, interactive decision guides and checklists, and examples of how tribes are engaging with genetics research. This project was supported by funding from the National Human Genome Research Institute of the National Institutes of Health.

September 2012 – Released a Guide for Researchers to Strengthen Research Relationships with Tribal Communities.

Along with Montana State University’s Center for Native Health Partnerships, developed a resource guide to provide insights for researchers committed to developing research that benefits Native peoples. In “‘Walk Softly and Listen Carefully’ Building Research Relationships with Tribal Communities,” we emphasize how crucial it is for researchers to develop an understanding of tribal sovereignty, Native cultures, communities’ experiences with research, and the particularities of place.

❖ ***Fostering Native Leadership in Research***

May 2012 – Hosted a Diabetes Research Scholar Seminar with Washington University.

The goal of the seminar was to strengthen all participants’ capacity to develop diabetes-related translation research in Native communities, through sharing research concepts and ideas with each other about diabetes-related translation research in Native communities and providing a space where faculty and scholar participants could share information and tools.

July 2012 – Hosted Diabetes Session at the Native Research Network Conference. The goal of this session was to convene junior and senior Native research investigators working on diabetes-related issues. The panelists described their research while highlighting applications of the Diabetes Prevention Program and other lifestyle and prevention interventions in Native communities, best practices in diabetes-related translational research and science, and culturally-based research designs and interventions.

Ongoing – Featured Presentations by Leading Indigenous Scholars at Embassy Roundtables.

In November 2011, May 2012, and September 2012, hosted four Indigenous scholars from Australia and New Zealand who provided NCAI staff and others in the Washington, DC, area information on international education initiatives, tribal technology development, digital cultural representation, health research, and genetics and bio-banking.

❖ *Nurturing National and International Partnerships*

December 2011 – Participated in Meetings with Key Leadership and Faculty at Arizona State University and the University of Arizona. Discussions covered university responsibility for research regulation in tribal contexts, tribal governance and legal code projects, and policies related to university extension programs.

February 2012 – Participated in Harvard University Roundtable on Native Education Data.

Consulted with Dr. Ronald Ferguson who leads the Tripod Project on School Improvement and the Harvard Achievement Gap Initiative about data his projects have collected on Native students in order to generate meaningful analyses.

August 2012 – Presented at the American Indian College Fund and Mellon Foundation's Tribal College and University Faculty Fellowship Conference. Provided invited workshop and keynote presentations at the conference designed to provide professional development for tribal college and university faculty pursuing their doctoral degrees in various fields.

September 2012 – Delivered Presentations across New Zealand and Australia in Key International Indigenous Forums. Presented the work of the PRC at an international Indigenous health research conference, an international forum on rural education, and at four universities with Indigenous faculty and staff, including one tribal university in New Zealand.

The NCAI Policy Research Center would like to acknowledge the leadership and service of our Advisory Council, which includes: Eddie F. Brown and Jacqueline Pata (Co-Chairs); W. Ron Allen; Sherry Salway Black; Terry Cross; John Echohawk; Joseph P. Gone; Carol Juneau; Andrew Lee; Juana Majel-Dixon; Elizabeth Medicine Crow; Alan Parker; Pat Sekaquaptewa; Benny Shendo, Jr.; Cris Stainbrook; Victoria Sutton; and Eddie Tullis. In addition, we would like to acknowledge key partnerships with the Montana State University's Center for Native Health Partnerships; the University of New Mexico's Center for Participatory Research; and the University of Washington's Indigenous Wellness Research Institute.



Mid Year Conference attendees participate in the Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum poster session.



Tribal leaders and advocates discuss efforts to strengthen tribal natural resource management during the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs' roundtable titled *Stewards of Our Homelands: The role of Native peoples in environmental protection*.

Partnership for Tribal Governance

The Partnership for Tribal Governance (PTG) is a multi-year initiative that seeks to identify, increase, organize, enhance, and make accessible the resources necessary to support tribes' efforts to strengthen their governance. Through partnerships with tribes, tribal intergovernmental and national Native organizations, academic and policy centers, practitioners, policymakers, and other resources, the PTG:

- Makes investments in self-determined tribal efforts to strengthen governance
- Supports increased education, training and technical assistance for tribes
- Enhances communication, coordination and collaboration among groups working to support tribes' efforts
- Supports the development and sharing of new knowledge
- Develops and promotes a policy research agenda to strengthen tribal governance
- Advocates policies to enhance and strengthen tribal governments
- Encourages increased public and media education about tribal governments
- Supports the internal capacity building of NCAI as an institution

The PTG serves as the organizational focal point within NCAI to assist tribes with their efforts to strengthen governance and at the same time support the institutional development of NCAI as a critical anchor institution for Indian Country. Much of the work of the PTG is possible only through integration and coordination with all programs and activities of NCAI, not as a stand-alone program. In its third year of implementation, the Partnership for Tribal Governance increased its impact on NCAI's mission in a number of areas.

- **Addressing Issues Critical to Tribal Leaders:** Initiated the *Protect Native Money* campaign in August 2012 in an effort to raise the visibility of financial education and consumer protection in Indian Country. As the result of two class-action lawsuit settlements, Native individuals will be receiving significant financial resources starting in August 2012. In addition, more than 50 tribal trust fund settlements amounting to more than \$1 billion will be distributed. *Protect Native Money* is working to provide critical information and resources to tribal leaders and individual Native people. As a part of this campaign, the PTG is supporting the reformation of the Native Financial Education Coalition and providing workshops and other opportunities to engage tribal leaders.

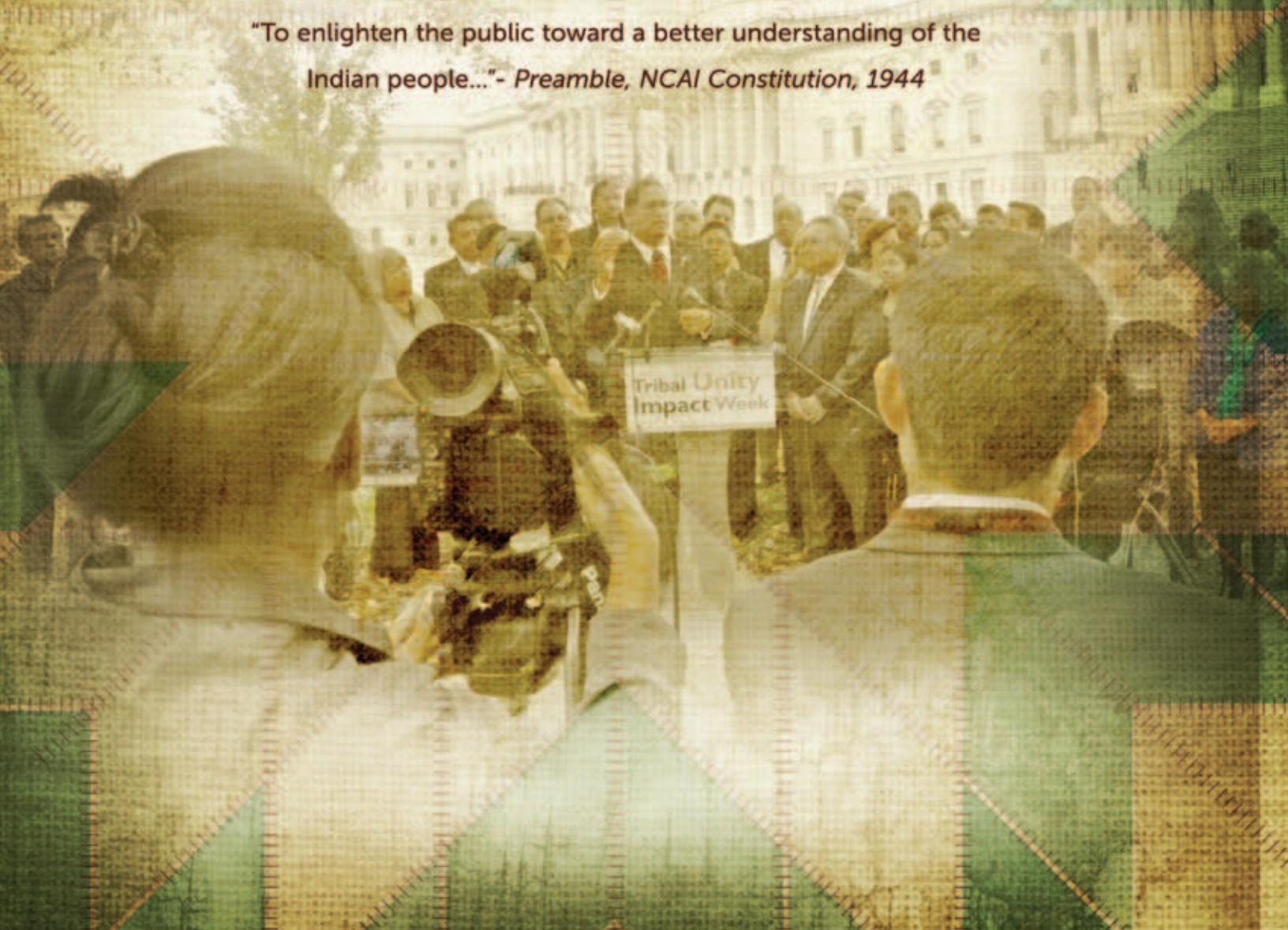
- **Promoting Tribally-Driven Policy:** Convened interactive session of tribal leaders at the 2011 Annual Convention that initiated a process to prioritize actions the Administration and Congress can take to advance self-determination and re-examine the trust relationship. This conversation provided the foundation for the pre-summit planning session and policy briefs developed for the third annual White House Tribal Nations Conference held in December 2011.
- **Working with Tribal Leaders and the Administration:** Played a critical role in helping to organize and coordinate the tribal leaders' involvement in the White House Tribal Nations Conference. NCAI worked with the board, other tribal leaders, intertribal regional organizations, and the Administration on the third White House Conference. The PTG provided program support to a number of Administration events, including the White House Rural Council Native Agriculture Roundtable.
- **Partnering with Native Organizations:** Worked in partnership with regional and national Native organizations to help coordinate efforts and enhance communications. The PTG, working in concert with other NCAI program staff, instituted regular communications, developed joint training opportunities, convened special meetings, and developed special networks. The National Tribal Communicators Network launched, in September 2011, has grown into a vital resource over the past year.
- **Working In Collaboration on a National Strategy:** Facilitated an alliance of Native natural resource organizations to develop a national natural resources strategy that includes increasing tribal capacity. The PTG continued to support the website for ONR Our Natural Resources that shares information to a broader tribal audience.
- **Convening Around New Ideas and Models:** Worked with the Law Library of Congress, tribal leaders and tribal legal organizations to pilot an effort to help tribes make their primary legal materials (codes, constitutions, court decisions, and others) more accessible to tribal governments, citizen, businesses and other publics. The Sovereigns Within a Sovereign effort is a long-term partnership.
- **Building Capacity in Governance:** Provided capacity building sessions for tribal leaders at a variety of venues focusing on topics of critical importance to strengthening tribal governance. PTG developed and presented 16 pre-, break-out, and special sessions including two special one-day youth leadership and governance training.
- **Making NCAI Resources More Accessible:** Supported the redesign of the NCAI website as an online resource to provide tools and information to increase tribal government efficiency and effectiveness. The PTG is also supporting the implementation of a new membership system to provide better and increased services to tribes.
- **Improving NCAI's Organizational Effectiveness:** Worked to enhance the internal capacity of the organization. The PTG provided support for critical internal system improvements in technology, finance, and administration.



NCAI's Sherry Salway Black presents about the Partnership for Tribal Governance.

Public Education

"To enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the
Indian people..."- *Preamble, NCAI Constitution, 1944*



Public Education

Since 1944, public education has been a fundamental part of NCAI's mission. In the span of the last year, NCAI has taken major steps to advance the organization's efforts to reach outside of Indian Country and educate the general public, policy makers, and members of the media about the vision of NCAI and our members for the future of "Our America."

The organization continues to advance public education efforts through conferences, events, educational offerings, meeting support, and media relations. Additionally NCAI has focused over the last few years on evolving our publications and public information, including our online resources and information systems.

A New Era for NCAI.ORG

As the institution which brings together tribal nations, citizens, leaders, advocates, and organizations, NCAI has also served as a central point for information that serves our peoples, our communities, and our future. From our early days of type-written proceedings, to fax broadcasts and an evolving online presence, we have worked to employ the best tools to strengthen Indian Country.

An Online Resource Center for Indian Country

With the re-launch of *NCAI.org* in April of 2012 we reached another important milestone in NCAI history. The new *NCAI.org* is a rich base of information, resources, and history.

NCAI advocates on the issues that matter to our members - and our new site organizes these issues so information is easily accessible and searchable. Our new Resources section features NCAI resolutions, publications, testimony and speeches, policy papers, and additional collections of consultation documents.



Much of NCAI's work is successful because it is founded on the Indian Country convenings we host through our conferences and events. The new Events section of the website helps attendees prepare and participate in NCAI's meetings. The national events calendar features important events around Indian Country, including a comprehensive listing of government consultations and youth-focused events. In 2012, NCAI also launched our new event and membership registration systems. All of these features and more are found at our website, www.ncai.org.

External Affairs/Public Relations

Educational Events & Meetings

Our Annual Convention, Executive Council Winter Session, and Mid Year Conference continue to be our primary events for convening our members for national gatherings. These events in themselves involve the entire staff of the organization as they are the culmination of our advocacy, policy work, and other initiatives of the organization, and the board.

External Affairs/Public Relations (continued)

In addition, NCAI assists with a range of national meetings and educational events with partners to bring together advocates and leaders to move forward on critical efforts. Events such as Tribal Unity Impact Week, the quarterly meetings of Tribal Budget Interior Council, and the National Intertribal Youth Summit, have all become part of our portfolio of event management efforts. NCAI also continues to increase the number of online educational webinars and conference calls, while also setting the stage for further advances in virtual learning in the years to come.

Media and the Press

NCAI remained attentive to engaging in and advancing the national dialogue on issues related tribes and Native peoples in the national, Native, and local media, while also calling attention to the work of NCAI and our membership. The organization was regularly called on to provide responses in the national conversation about every issue we advocate on, including tribal sovereignty, violence against women, Native identity, anti-defamation, and cultural awareness. In 2012, NCAI's communications efforts were proactive, releasing opinion pieces, press releases, and statements to national and Indian Country media outlets on breaking developments. Our efforts also included providing resources for media to easily access materials such as video, audio, and photography for use in reporting.

Publications

While the organization focused its efforts on enhancing online offerings, NCAI's staff continued to produce leading publications and analysis on important issues. From NCAI's Policy Research Center to the Legislative Affairs team, NCAI is focused on publishing comprehensive analysis on the issues that matter most to our membership, including economic development, conference proceedings, research standards in Indian Country, the organization's Annual Report, and the Indian Country Budget Request.

Visual Storytelling and Communications

NCAI's commitment to education extends to our drive to produce compelling visual learning tools and educational products for the general public and our members. The State of Indian Nations Address for a second year was broadcast from the Knight Studios at the Newseum in Washington, DC, to a national online audience. This national event now reaches tens of thousands of people via a live and archived broadcast. C-SPAN continues to make the State of Indian Nations an important event on the national calendar.

The generous support of Walmart made possible a new four-video series about NCAI's 68th Annual Convention in Portland, Oregon. The Convention's theme, Footprints into the Future, was highlighted in the series recapping the events of the historic convention. Three of the videos focused on the Convention proceedings and youth involvement while a fourth longer video focused on the history and role of the NCAI Annual Convention. The series, available online at NCAI.org, has been featured on public and tribal television stations throughout the country.

Enhancing Communications Capacity

NCAI continued to develop and enhance tribal communications capacity in Indian Country through the National Tribal Communicators Network. The Network, in its first full year, produced training events at our conferences and a series of webinars. The Network launched a list serve to provide direct collaboration between over 100 members. As part of the DC Native Public Relations Roundtable, NCAI also contributed to the national and local efforts to educate the general public during Native American Heritage Month.

Social Media

NCAI has as an active identity online as NCAI1944 and is active in the conversation online and through new media. NCAI and many of our initiatives can be accessed by visiting the following locations:



www.facebook.com/ncai1944



www.twitter.com/ncai1944



www.flickr.com/ncai



www.youtube.com/ncai1944

Membership

NCAI is a membership-driven organization. Our membership is a strong representation of the many nations that constitute the whole of Indian Country.

NCAI membership is made up of tribes and individuals who have met the eligibility criteria and paid dues as outlined in the Article III of the NCAI By-Laws. Members are determined to be in good standing upon full payment of dues and having fulfilled the requirements of the Credentials Committee.

NCAI's membership consists of six categories:

1. Tribe Membership

Recognized as a tribe or other identifiable group of American Indians by the Department of the Interior, Court of Claims, the Indian Claims Commission or a State.

2. Individual Indian Membership

Recognized as a member by an Indian tribe or band, or combination of tribes and bands, recognized by the Department of the Interior, the Indian Claims Commission, Court of Claims, or a State.

3. Individual Associate Membership

Individuals that do not qualify for membership for lack of Indian ancestry. Non-Indian applicants are admitted as non-voting associate members.

4. Individual Indian Lifetime Membership

Recognized as a member by an Indian tribe or band, or combination of tribes and bands, recognized by the Department of the Interior, the Indian Claims Commission, Court of Claims, or a State.

5. Individual Associate Lifetime Membership

Individuals that do not qualify for membership for lack of Indian ancestry. Non-Indian applicants are admitted as non-voting associate members.

6. Associate Organization Membership

Organizations have the same rights and privileges afforded to Individual Associate members.

In 2011-2012, NCAI membership continued to grow to new levels. This demonstration of tribal unity strengthens NCAI as we continue to work together to protect tribal sovereignty and advance the well-being of Indian Country.



NCAI members have access to a number of resources to help support and serve their tribal communities.

Partners & Supporters

In November 1944, tribal leaders faced the terrible threat of the federal termination policy but they responded by making a tremendous sacrifice that would change the history of Indian Country. In spite of the cost, they traveled to Denver, Colorado to gather with other tribal leaders and establish the National Congress of American Indians. They invested in the future, and our communities are still reaping the benefits of that investment today.

The success of NCAI's work since that time is built on the foundation of the generosity and ingenuity of tribal leaders, tribal nations, foundations, businesses, Native citizens, and non-Native allies. We are deeply grateful for the investments of the following NCAI partners:

Tribal Investors

- ❖ Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
- ❖ Central Council Tlingit & Haida Tribes of Alaska
- ❖ Chickasaw Nation
- ❖ Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- ❖ Coeur D'Alene Tribe
- ❖ Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians
- ❖ Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians
- ❖ Forest County Potawatomi Community
- ❖ Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation
- ❖ Ho-Chunk Nation
- ❖ Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
- ❖ Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
- ❖ Lummi Nation
- ❖ Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
- ❖ Morongo Band of Mission Indians
- ❖ Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
- ❖ Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin
- ❖ Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians
- ❖ Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians
- ❖ Prairie Band of Potawatomi Nation
- ❖ Prairie Island Tribal Council
- ❖ Pueblo of Isleta
- ❖ Redding Rancheria
- ❖ Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians
- ❖ San Manuel Band of Mission Indians
- ❖ Santo Domingo Tribe
- ❖ Seminole Tribe of Florida
- ❖ Seneca Nation
- ❖ Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community
- ❖ Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians
- ❖ Swinomish Tribe
- ❖ The Tulalip Tribes
- ❖ The Ute Indian Tribe
- ❖ Tohono O'Odham Nation
- ❖ Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians
- ❖ Ute Mountain Ute

Foundation Partners

- ❖ W.K.Kellogg Foundation
- ❖ Open Society Foundation
- ❖ Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- ❖ Ford Foundation
- ❖ Northwest Area Foundation
- ❖ Annie E. Casey Foundation

Federal Government Partners

- ❖ Department of Agriculture
- ❖ Department of Defense
- ❖ Department of Health and Human Services
- ❖ Department of the Interior
- ❖ Department of Justice
- ❖ Environmental Protection Agency
- ❖ National Institutes of Health
- ❖ Small Business Administration

Business Allies

- ❖ Bank of America
- ❖ Walmart
- ❖ Wells Fargo
- ❖ Aetna, Inc.
- ❖ Key Bank
- ❖ University of Phoenix
- ❖ Roche Diagnostics Corporation

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