

**Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission
2018 Annual Report**



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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Governor Holcomb, and Legislators:

Siyo. (pronounced she-oh) This means “hello” in the Eastern Band dialect of the Cherokee language, As an enrolled member of the Eastern Band of Cherokees from Cherokee North Carolina and the director of the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs commission, I reflect on my first year in this role and feel honored and grateful to have this opportunity to serve all the Native Americans that live in the State of Indiana. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, approximately 1.77 million people reported being of Native American origin in the U.S. There are 573 federally recognized tribes in the United States, and many of the Native Americans living in Indiana are enrolled members from these tribes located in other states. INContext, the publication of the Indiana Business Research Center at Indiana University’s Kelley School of Business, reports that 18,462 Hoosiers reported Native American as their only race. It is also exciting to share that the State of Indiana has two federally recognized tribes that have land in Indiana. The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi is the only federally recognized tribe which has sovereign land in South Bend, Indiana, and the Miami Oklahoma tribe has a Cultural Resource Extension Office located in Fort Wayne, Indiana. I am very excited to work with both tribes in collaborating for a brighter future.

A large majority of Native Americans living in Indiana are enrolled members who live off the reservations in other states, and I number myself among them. I was born in Evansville, Indiana and raised my family in the Mount Vernon area for over thirty years. Nevertheless, I still have strong ties to the Qualla Boundary which was known many years ago as the Cherokee Indian Reservation located in North Carolina. I know and understand some of the struggles of being Native American and living in Indiana. As the director of the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission, it is my personal mission to serve all Native Americans living in Indiana by educating, facilitating and providing resources to improve the lives of those we serve. The commission’s goal is to travel throughout the state to listen to our Native people, and to understand their needs and issues. It is also essential to provide education for non-native communities to overcome obstacles, such as cultural stereotypes, that can lead to discrimination in school and workplace environments. The INAIAC believe in building bridges among our Native American Indian community, and uniting together to create opportunities for our future generations through education.

As we continue to develop and implement new initiatives, the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission welcomes all to visit us to learn more about our efforts to strengthen the Native American Indian communities throughout the State of Indiana.

Sincerely

MeLissa J. Williams, MSM

Director of the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission

melwilliams@icrc.in.gov Email

Cultivate to Inspire

“A single twig breaks but a bundle of twigs is strong.”

Tecumseh

Creation

The Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission, (INAIAC) is created under the authority of P.L. 283-2003, passed by the Indiana General Assembly in 2003 and codified at IC 4-23-32.

Purpose

The purpose of the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission is to study problems common to Native American Indian residents of Indiana in the areas of employment, education, civil rights, health, and housing. The Commission may make recommendations to appropriate federal, state, and local governmental agencies relevant to these topics.

Powers and Duties

The Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission shall have the following powers and duties:

- Cooperate with public and private agencies and local, state, and federal governments to coordinate programs for persons who are Native American Indian;
- Evaluate state programs delivering services to Native American Indian persons to determine their effectiveness and make recommendations to public officials about future support to continue existing programs and establish new programs;
- Monitor state funded programs delivering services to persons who are Native American Indian to determine the extent that promised and mandated services are delivered, making recommendations for improvement;
- Recommend legislative changes to the Governor and General Assembly and follow and evaluate laws affecting persons who are Native American Indian;
- Promote cooperation among state and local agencies providing educational programs for the Native American Indian;
- Review policy related to evaluation, certification, licensure, and training standards of Native Americans and make recommendations to appropriate parties; monitor the courts' uses of Native American Indian Laws; and
- Submit an annual report of its activities to the Governor and the General Assembly on January 1 of each year.

Responsibility

The Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission shall carry out the responsibilities designated by IC 4-23-32 and these By-laws. The members of the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission shall accept the responsibility of the office and declare their intention to execute the duties defined under the State and Municipal law to the best of their ability and to respect and observe the requirements established by IC 4-23-32.

The Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commissioners is the Governing Body and is responsible for the overall direction of the Commission.

Their duties and responsibilities are to:

- Committed to the mission and the goals of the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission;
- Knowledgeable about the operation, services, and programs available or concerning Native Americans;
- Objective in evaluating the programs, problems, and policies of the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission;
- Resist all pressures from groups and individuals, either from within or outside the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission, who attempt to compromise the values, ideals, goals, policies, or prerogatives of the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission;
- Budget time and plan ahead in order to attend the meetings of the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission and of those committees to which a member is appointed, to accept and discharge specific responsibilities, either on committees or in the general work of the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission;
- Refrain from using one's position as a member of the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission to obtain special privileges or favor;
- Assist the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission in identifying the needs of Native American Indian issues;
- Establish and maintain goals and priorities utilizing long and short range goals;
- Promote for the new development and/or improvement of services, programs and activities for Native American Indian people; and
- Assess the performance of the Commission through continuous self-evaluation.

Commission Meetings

The Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission convenes every third Wednesday on a bi-monthly basis. Each of the INAIAC meetings are open to the public. In 2018 these meetings were held at the Eiteljorg Museum located on 500 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46204. Eight commissioners must be present to establish quorum, which was achieved for all meetings during the 2018 calendar year.

The 2018 Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission meeting dates were the following:

- February 21, 2018
- April 18, 2018
- June 20, 2018
- August 15, 2018
- October 17, 2018
- December 19, 2018

Composition of the Commission

IC 4-23-32-2

Native American Indian

Sec 2. As used in this chapter, "Native American Indian" means an individual who is at least one (1) of the following:

- An Alaska native as defined in 43 U.S.C. 1602 (b).
- An Indian as defined in 25 U.S.C. 450b (d).
- A native Hawaiian as defined in 20U.S.C. 7912(1).

As added by PL. 133-2012, Sec.30.

IC 4-23-32-6

Sec. 6 The civil rights commission established by IC22-9-1-4 shall provide staff and administrative support for the commission.

In March, 2017, Indiana Civil Rights Commission Executive Director, Greg Wilson hired the first Native American director for the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission, MeLissa J. Williams. Director Williams is an enrolled member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee's Indians that is located on the Cherokee, North Carolina, Qualla Boundary that was once known as the Cherokee Indian Reservation. The director is an employee of the Indiana Civil Rights Commission agency.

Commission Composition and Term

The composition of the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission consists of those members identified in IC 4-23-32-4.

Term of Appointment

The governor shall appoint each Native American Indian member of the Commission to a term of four (4) years, and any vacancy occurring shall be filled by the governor for the unexpired term. In the event a vacancy on the Commission shall arise, the Commission may choose to offer recommendations to the Governor of qualified candidates for such vacancies.

The following commissioners terms expire July 31,2018; Chairwoman, Sally Tuttle, Vice Chair, Paul Strack, Secretary, Erin Oliver, Tracy Locke, Pete Magnant, Shannon Turner and Nathan Underwood.

(IC 4-23-32-4) The commission consists of fifteen (15) voting members and two (2) nonvoting members. The voting members of the commission consist of the following:

Six (6) Native Americans Indians, each from a different geographic region of Indiana.

Northern Region of Indiana,

Paul Strack, Vice Chair

Miami Oklahoma

Erin Oliver, Secretary

Miami Nation of Indiana

Central Region,

Sally Tuttle, Chair

Oklahoma Choctaw

Tracy Locke

Citizens Band of Potawatomi

Southern Indiana,

Shannon Turner

Navajo

Nathan Underwood

Tlingit

Two (2) Native Americans who have knowledge in Native American traditions and spiritual issues.

Traditional Position vacant since 2016.

Spiritual Position, Mr. Pete Magnant, Keweenaw Bay Community.

The commissioner of the department of correction or commissioner designee.

Mr. David, Liebel, Department of Corrections, Director of Religious Services

The commissioner of the commission for higher education or the commissioner's designee.

Mr. Sean Tierney, Commission of Higher Education,

The commissioner of the state department of health or the commissioner's designee.

Ms. Antoniette Holt, Director of Indiana Department of Health, Minority Health

The secretary of family and social services or the secretary's designee.

Ms. Kylie Flynn, Director of FSSA/OMPP Policy and Program Development

The director of the department of natural resources or the director's designee.

Mrs. Elizabeth Gamboa, DNR, Staff Attorney serves as a proxy to Director Cameron Clark.

The state superintendent of public instruction or the superintendent's designee.

Dr. Ken Folks, Department of Education, Chief Academic Officer

The commissioner of the department of workforce development or the commissioner's designee.

Mr. Anthony Jones, DWD, Director

(b) The non-voting member so the commission consist of the following: one (1) member of the house of representative appointed by the speaker of the House of Representative.

House of Representative Dan Leonard (R)

One (1) member of the senate appointed by the president pro tempore of the senate.

Senator Greg Walker (R)

Directors Activities

The Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission Director, MeLissa J. Williams, promoted the INAIAC programs to develop future collaborations and partnerships with the following various departments, universities, organizations and agencies throughout the State of Indiana:

- American Indian Center of Indiana, Inc., Indianapolis
- American Indian Council of Indiana Pow Wow, Lebanon, Indiana
- Avon, Indiana Library
- Columbia City Pow Wow,
- Conner Prairie, Indianapolis
- Department of Education, Cultural Competency Council, Indianapolis
- Department of Natural Resources, Indianapolis
- Department of Natural Resources, State Parks, Indianapolis
- Department of Veteran's Affairs, Indianapolis

- Eiteljorg Museum of Native Americans and Western Art, Indian Market Days, Indianapolis
- Indiana State Department of Health, Indianapolis
- Indiana State Library, Indianapolis
- Indiana University, Bloomington, First Nations Native American Cultural Center
- Indiana University, Purdue University, Indianapolis
- Indiana Veteran's Hospital, Indianapolis
- Miami, Oklahoma's Cultural Resources Extension Office, Fort Wayne
- Pokagon Band of Potawatomi's, South Bend
- Purdue University, Lafayette, Native American Educational and Cultural Center

Nationally, the Director Williams and INAIAC Chairwoman Sally Tuttle participated in the following conferences: Governors Interstate Indian Council Conference, South Dakota, North Carolina's Native American Commission, North Carolina, and the American Indian Women's Indigenous Conference, North Carolina.

Director Williams participated in the following Indiana Civil Rights Commission events to promote the awareness of civil rights education.

- Indiana Black Expo, Indianapolis, Muncie
- Indiana State Fair, Indianapolis
- Center Township Fun Fair for Kids, Indianapolis
- Fever Game, Indianapolis
- Indiana Fair Housing Panel Discussion, Indianapolis
- Indiana State Library Day for Legislatures, Indianapolis
- Warren Township Elementary School Cultural Bias Training

Cultivate to Educate

“Remember that your children are not your own, but are lent to you by the creator.”

Mohawk

In 2018, the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission focused on promoting the INAIAC Native American student scholarships, INAIAC Teacher Grants, and Native American Indian Days at the Capitol. In the previous years, the INAIAC budgeted to give out \$10,000 in scholarships. In 2018, the INAIAC increased their scholarship amounts to assist Native American Indian students attending a public or private college or university in Indiana. The increase for the fall and spring semester was increased to \$3000.00, and summer scholarships maintained their current award amount of \$1500.00.

According to the National Congress of American Indians, there are approximately 644,000 American Indian and Alaskan Native students in the United States K-12 system, representing 1.2 percent of public schools nationally. Recently, the Indiana Department of Education website recorded that there were 2,135 Native American Indian students enrolled in Indiana. Education is one of the keys to success. Native American student graduation rates increased significantly in the Indiana school system unlike many other states.

The Indiana Department of Education reported the following figures in the various categories in graduation rates.

Year	Cohort N	Grad N	Grad Rate	Non-waiver Grad N	Non-Waiver Grad Rate
2017-2018	82,234	72,465	88.12%	66,436	80.79%
2016-2017	81,854	71,366	87.19%	65,561	80.10%
2015-2016	79,116	70,490	89.10%	65,174	82.38%
2014-2015	78,774	70,026	88.89%	65,251	82.83%
2013-2014	78,346	70,557	90.06%	65,522	83.63%

However, the Indiana Department of Education reports that statewide, there are 2,135 Native American Indian students enrolled in the 2018-2019 school year. This is a decrease from the 2010-2011 school year. The Native American Indian student enrollment for 2010-2011 school year was 3011. The commission needs to develop initiatives to identify the causes of this significant decrease in the number of Native American Indian students enrolled in Indiana schools in less than ten years.

Student Demographic	Cohort Count*	Graduates	2018 State Graduation Rate
American Indian	208	173	83.17%
Asian	1,818	1,737	95.54%
Black	9,522	7,566	79.46%
Hispanic	7,898	6,690	84.70%
Multiracial	3,315	2,808	84.71%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	59	50	84.75%
White	59,414	53,441	89.95%

The American Indian College Fund has reported that there are major gaps in higher education. It is exciting that in Indiana, the high school graduation rate for Native American students has increased significantly. However, it is not possible to determine college graduation rates from the Indiana Commission of Higher Education because the ethnic category of Native Americans is often included in a collective demographic group such as “other.” Often this category includes other identifying labels such as those who are unable to classify their ethnicity, as well as those individuals who have backgrounds from more than one race. This phenomenon is another example of disconnect in disparity in the Indiana Commission of Higher Education Equity Report, which contributes to incomplete reporting of Native Americans graduation rates as opposed to other student populations such as those who are African American, Hispanic and Latino, and Caucasian. While it is reported by the U.S Census Bureau that only 14% of Native Americans and Alaska Natives age 25 or older have a bachelor’s degree compared to the 30% of the overall US population, Indiana will not know the percentage of Native American student success in higher education because of this continuing lack of specificity in reporting on college application forms and final reports.

This issue continues to affect our Native American constituents as it pertains to addressing disparities in academic achievement as well. The Commission of Higher Education reported there was a resolution passed in 2013 to close the achievement gap by half by 2018, and completely resolve it in 2025. However, Native American students will not be specifically counted in this ambitious effort, resulting in a missed opportunity for Native Americans to show their potential and successes. This could potentially present additional challenges for Native American students in gaining access to resources and opportunities they need to succeed, and this is a cause of concern for the commission. Future initiatives to examine this issue and its impact, and to offer data-driven recommendations are planned for the future.

In many of the tribal colleges, the focus is maintained on careers and workforce development. Since there are no tribal colleges for Native Americans in Indiana, the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission created a vocational scholarship in 2017. This scholarship makes it possible for Native American students to stay in Indiana to learn a technical trade, or receive additional certification in order to be successful in the workforce.

To qualify for the INAIAC educational or vocational scholarship, the Native American Indian student has to have lived in Indiana for over one year, and be enrolled full-time in a private or public university or vocational certified institution located in Indiana. The student must provide a tribal enrollment card from one of the 573 federally recognized tribes, or tribal enrollment with the Miami Nation of Indiana. He / she need to submit an application that is located on www.in.gov/inaiac website. Reference information on federally recognized tribes can be found at www.bia.gov/as-ia/ofa and www.ncsl.org/research/state-tribal-institute/list-of-federal-and-state-recognized-tribes.aspx.

Indiana Native American Indian Specialty License Plate



\$25.00 of the fee to purchase the Indiana Native Specialty Plate is earmarked for the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission. The INAIAC budgets a portion of it to fund the scholarships, teacher grants, and special projects.

During the June 2018 commission meeting, the commission members voted to raise the summer scholarship award since there were from \$1,500 to \$1,665.00 during the summer session only.

Listed below are the demographics of the students.

Summer 2018

<i>TRIBAL ENROLLMENT</i>	<i>GENDER</i>	<i>RESIDENT COUNTY</i>	<i>EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION</i>	<i>GRADE LEVEL</i>	<i>AMOUNT AWARDED</i>
Navajo	F	Monroe	IU- Bloomington	Senior	\$1665.00
Citizens Band Potawatomi	F	Warrick	IU- Bloomington	Senior- Graduated	\$1665.00
Tlingit	F	Marion	IU- Bloomington	Senior- Graduated	\$1665.00

During the 2018 fall academic year, Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission members voted to increase the scholarship amount from \$2,500.00 to \$3,000.00. The INAIAC scholarships assisted four students who graduated from state universities in Indiana in 2018. Due to privacy policies, the commission found it challenging to identify Native American students enrolled in colleges

in Indiana, and the will work to develop a resolution in the future to facilitate the awarding of the INAIAC scholarships to qualified students. Indiana University, Bloomington, First Nations Native American Cultural Center, IUPUI, Indianapolis and Purdue University, Native American Educational and Cultural Center and Notre Dame have proven to be sources of great support for Native American/Alaska Native students that attend these universities.

Fall 2018

<i>Tribal Enrollment</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Resident County</i>	<i>Educational Institution</i>	<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>Amount Awarded</i>
Navajo	F	Monroe	IU-Bloomington	Senior	\$3000.00
Navajo	F	Hendricks	IU-Bloomington	Junior	\$3000.00
Navajo	F	Hamilton	IUPUI-Indpls.	Sophomore	\$3000.00
Oklahoma Choctaw	M	Howard	Purdue- Lafayette	Freshman	\$3000.00

Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission Teachers Grant

The INAIAC voted to implement a grant to support all teachers teaching in public, private and charter schools in Indiana in efforts to take their students to approved sites to learn about Native American history, tradition, and culture. The seven approved sites are: Angel Mounds State Park, Eiteljorg Museum of Native American and Western Art, Mounds State Park, Chief John Baptiste Richardville House, Historic Forks of the Wabash, Prophetstown State Park, and the INAIAC Native American Indian Days at the Capitol. On October 19, 2018, the commission voted to increase the number of teachers to receive the grant from only 10 teachers/schools to 25 schools per year. Schools are eligible for one award per year, and each teacher is able to apply for reimbursement of their field trips up to \$250.00. A total of \$1,750.00 was award for this program in 2018, which is a significant increase in grant awards since its inception. Additional funding was gained through partnership with the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles Native American Indian License Plate. Listed below are the schools that were awarded the grant for 2018:

- Blackford High School
- Center Grove Community School Corporation
- Central Elementary, Pike Township School
- Greenwood Christian Academy
- Matchbook Learning Wendell Phillips
- Resurrection Catholic School
- South Decatur Elementary School

Native American Indian Days at the Statehouse

The Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission hosted an exciting Native American Indian Days event at the Indiana Statehouse on November 1, 2018. The INAIAC partnered with the only two federally recognized tribes that have land in the State of Indiana, the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi and the Miami Oklahoma. The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi has land in trust in South Bend, Indiana. The Miami Oklahoma has purchased land in Fort Wayne, Indiana. This year, the Native commissioners were actively involved in the day, teaching about their tribal customs and history. Chairwoman Sally Tuttle, Oklahoma Choctaw, Commissioner Shannon Turner, Navajo from New Mexico, Commissioner Paul Strack, Oklahoma Miami, Commissioner Pete Magnant, Keweenaw Bay Community, L'Arse Reservation, Michigan, all presented lessons on their tribal history, traditions and culture to the 125 students. Other enrolled members of tribes from the Native American Indian community living throughout the State of Indiana presenting information on their Native American tribes were Jeremy Turner, Oklahoma Shawnee, Bertie Printup, Oklahoma Cherokee, Larkin Four Killer, Eastern Band Cherokee, Caroline Castoreno, Lipan Apache and Leroy Malatere, Ojibwa, Turtle Band of Chippewa. The INAIAC also partnered with the Director Felica Ahasteen-Bryant, Navajo, from Purdue University Native American Education and Cultural Center, who provided craft instruction to students. Dr. Charmaine Champion Shaw, Cheyenne, from Indiana University, Purdue University, Indianapolis brought the Native American students from IUPUI to talk to the elementary age students and teachers about identifying and overcoming Native American Indian stereotypes. Conner Prairie staff presented information on Native American artifacts, and Indiana State Parks Chief of Interpretation Angie Manuel brought the Birds of Prey from Hardy Lake as a way for the students to learn about habitats and preserving the earth.

The commission also invited two Native youths to participate. The first youth was a resident of Indianapolis and a tribal member of the Eastern Band of Cherokees, Wehayre Codynah, who sang the National Anthem in the Cherokee language. The second youth, Aslan Reagan, author of the book *Young Water Protectors*, shared his experiences at the Standing Rock Pipeline protests.



(l-r) Oklahoma Miami, Assistant Preservation Officer, Doug Peconge and Commissioner Paul Strack explaining to the students about the Miami culture, tradition and heritage. Miami Oklahoma has a Cultural Extension Office in Fort Wayne, Indiana.



(l-r) Director Williams, dressed in her traditional clothing from the 1800 period of the Eastern Band of Cherokees posed with Wehayre Codynah, Eastern Band of Cherokee after they sang the National Anthem in the Eastern Band Cherokee language.

Cultivate to Advocate

“It is not the honor that you take with you, but the heritage you leave behind.”
Branch Rickey

Governor Eric J. Holcomb proclaimed on November 2018 to be Native American Indian Month. On November 2, 2018, the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission hosted several events to promote awareness of Native American Indian culture, and the traditions of Natives living in Indiana. Nine Native Americans presented their tribal customs, traditions and history. Tribes represented during this event were Navajo, Oklahoma Choctaw, Oklahoma Shawnee, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, Eastern Band of Cherokee, North Carolina, Miami Oklahoma, Apache, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi, and Ojibway. The INAIAC also partnered with the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi, Eiteljorg Museum, Conner Prairie, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Indiana State Parks, and the Department of Education to make this day successful and fun for all students.

Honoring Native American Veterans

On November 3, 2018, the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission partnered with the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs to host the first ceremony in the State of Indiana to honor Native American Indian Veterans at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds located in Danville, Indiana. The Indiana Department of Veteran Affairs identified over 800 Native American Indian Veterans that live in the State of Indiana.

The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Chairman Matt Wesaw and Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Senior Vice President of Tribal Government and Air Force Veteran Scott Brewer handed out commemorative challenge coins to 74 Native American Indian Veterans.

Two Native American Indian Veterans were identified for special awards. These two veterans were enrolled members of the federally recognized tribe of Pokagon Band of Potawatomi that were honored with the Hoosier Veteran's Award, INAIAC Distinguished Service Award and the INAIAC Legacy Award.



- (A) Picture from L-R, INAIAC Legacy and the Hoosier Veteran Award was presented to enrolled member of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi, Veteran of the Korean War, Jerry Campbell by Senator Greg Walker and Department of Veteran Affairs Director, James Brown.
- (B) Picture from L-R, Senator Greg Walker presented the Hoosier Veteran Award while Director of Veterans Affairs, honored Ralph Wilson, enrolled Native American Indian member of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi and Vietnam War Veteran with the INAIAC Distinguished Service Award.
- (C) Picture from L-R, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Chairman, Matt Wesaw shook hands with every Native American Indian Veterans that attended the ceremony. Pokagon Band of Potawatomi, Army Veteran, Marcus Winchester presented each Native American Indian with a challenge coin created by the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission.

Native American Health

Indian Health Services reported that “The American Indian and Alaska Native people have long experienced lower health status when compared with other Americans. Lower life expectancy and the disproportionate disease burden exist perhaps because of inadequate education, disproportionate poverty, discrimination in the delivery of health services, and cultural differences. These are broad quality of life issues rooted in economic adversity and poor social conditions.

Indian Health Services also stated that diseases of the heart, malignant neoplasm, unintentional injuries, and diabetes are leading causes of American Indian and Alaska Native deaths (2009-2011). Native Americans and Alaska Natives born today have a life expectancy that is 5.5 years less than the U.S. all races population (73.0 years to 78.5 years, respectively). Native Americans and Alaska Natives continue to die at higher rates than other Americans in many categories of serious health

conditions, including chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, diabetes mellitus, unintentional injuries, assault/homicide, intentional self-harm/suicide, and chronic lower respiratory diseases.

Given the higher health status enjoyed by most Americans, the lingering health disparities of Native Americans and Alaska Natives continue to be troubling. In trying to account for the disparities, health care experts, policymakers, and tribal leaders are looking at many factors that impact the health of Indian people, including the adequacy of funding for the Indian health care delivery system.”

There are no Indian healthcare facilities in Indiana, despite the facts that two federally recognized tribes possess land in Indiana, and 18,462 Hoosiers reported during the 2010 census to be only of Native American heritage. According to the 2010 Census Bureau, over 31,000 report to have Native American ancestry. More Native Americans live off the reservations and in the urban area, which possibly contributes to gaps in health care and education. These are areas that the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission can give investigate in order to make recommendations to local and state agencies. In April, 2018, the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission chose to advocate for Native American health by sponsoring the 16th Annual Indiana Conference on Cultural Competency for Behavioral Healthcare. This event featured keynote speaker Ashley Tuomi, Ph.D, CEO of American Indian Health and Family Services located in Detroit, MI. This conference was sponsored by the Equity Institute on Race, Culture & Transformative Action at Indiana University Purdue University, Indianapolis. The commission felt that Dr. Ashley Tuomi would be a great resource to the medical professionals since there are over 25,000 Native Americans in the State of Indiana. Listed below is the biography of Dr. Ashley Tuomi:

Dr. Ashley Tuomi is a member of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde in Oregon. She grew up in a military family traveling around the United States. This experience became the stepping stone to her career serving the health needs of the American Indian/Alaska Native population. She graduated from Portland State University with a Bachelor of Science in Sociology. She then went on to get her Master of Health Policy and Administration from Washington State University. Ashley also served as the Executive Director for a tribal consortium clinic. Recently Ashley graduated from A.T Still University with a Doctorate in Health Sciences. Dr. Tuomi is dedicated to improving the health of Native Americans/ Alaska Natives and has a passion for serving the Urban Indian population. She welcomes the opportunity to meet other Natives around the country and to learn the culture and customs of other tribes.

Dr. Tuomi was a great resource to educate the medical professionals attending this conference on the disparity in the health systems on Native American health. The included table from the INcontext publication from IU Kelley School of Business, shows the breakdown of the Native American population that lives in Indiana.

Top 10 Tribes Specified for Indiana's Native American and Multiracial Population, 2010

Tribe	Native American Alone	Tribe	Multiracial Population Reporting Race as Native American in Combination with Another Race
Cherokee	3,036	Cherokee	12,583
Mexican American Indian	938	Blackfeet	2,065
Chippewa	618	Mexican American Indian	1,441
Sioux	508	Sioux	1,340
Blackfeet	375	Chippewa	1,208
Potawatomi	368	Choctaw	852
Choctaw	323	Apache	824
Apache	277	Potawatomi	724
Iroquois	255	Iroquois	640
Navajo	230	Navajo	547

<http://www.incontext.indiana.edu/index.asp>

A publication of the Indiana Business Research Center at Indiana University's Kelley School of Business.

Update 5/21/2015 - This table is based on Census Bureau Table QT-P7, which does not include the **Miami tribal grouping**. Indiana has a large Miami (alone) population totaling 1,432 across all categories within that tribal grouping.

Note: Not everyone who reported their race as Native American also specified a tribe.

Source: IBRC, using Census 2010 data

In Conclusion

Native Americans living in the State of Indiana are not only residents of Indiana, but tribal members of various Sovereign Nations of the United States, and citizens of the United States. While the Native American population makes up of just 0.3 percent of Indiana's total population, those who specified their race as Native American, American Indian and/or Alaska Native alone or in combination with another race account for 0.8 percent of the total population. Native Americans are important to the State of Indiana. They attend schools, graduate, work and raise families in Indiana. They are striving to be successful just as other individuals living in our great state. Many people ask Native Americans various questions that range from "How much do you have to be to get benefits?", and "What is your Indian name?" In some schools, teachers task their students with the assignment to dress up as Native Americans in portraying the annual Thanksgiving Feast in November. Teachers may allow the students to create their own Native American name which is offensive to Native Americans and perpetuates inaccuracies and stereotypes which build barriers between Native Americans and the communities in which they work, play, and live. Native college students are often ignored when trying to apply for scholarships or silenced implicitly or explicitly when attempting to share their experiences. Many times, non-Natives do not understand the impact of these missteps in the classroom or workplace. The main thing that Native Americans want to invite non-Natives to do in order to build cultural bridges it to respect the culture, respect the tradition, respect the history and respect the people who were the first people on this land by not silencing but acknowledging, even celebrating Indiana Native American Indians.

The Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission is both humbled by and passionate about the opportunity to serve the Native American Indian population that is in Indiana. As Sitting Bull once stated, "Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children." The commission looks forward to improving the lives of Native Americans in the State of Indiana by educating, facilitating and creating an awareness of the vibrant community of Native Americans living Indiana. This INAIAC has laid the foundation for future commissions to continue this service

The Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission would also like to thank the Governor of Indiana, Eric J. Holcomb and the General Assembly for their continued pursuit to support the Native American Indian population in Indiana. The Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission thanks the Indiana Civil Rights Commission Executive Director, Greg Wilson, Deputy Director of External Affairs, Lesley Gordon, and Deputy Director of General Counsel, Doneisha Posey for their support as the commission strategically plans to make a difference in the lives of the Native American Indian communities today and for future generations living in Indiana in the areas of civil rights, health, housing, education and employment.

Resources

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