



NACS News

*A Tradition
of Caring*

November 2023
Volume 24, Issue 11

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

- 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, New York, 14207, (716) 874-4460, Fax (716) 874-1874
- 1522 Main Street, Niagara Falls, New York, 14305, (716) 299-0914, Fax (716) 299-0903
- 76 West Avenue, Lockport, New York, 14094, (716) 302-3035, Fax (716) 302-3037
- 100 College Avenue, Suite 200, Rochester, New York, 14607, (585) 514-3984
- 960 James Street, Syracuse, NY 13203, (315) 322-8754

National Native American Heritage Month

submitted by George T. Ghosen, Editor

On August 3, 1990, President of the United States George H. W. Bush declared the month of November as National American Indian Heritage Month, also referred to as Native American Heritage Month. The bill read in part that "The President has authorized and requested to call upon Federal, State and local Governments, groups and organizations and the people of the United States to observe such month with appropriate programs, ceremonies and activities". This landmark bill honoring America's tribal people represented a major step in the establishment of this celebration which began in 1976 when a Cherokee/Osage Indian named [Jerry C. Elliott-High Eagle](#) authored Native American Awareness Week legislation the first historical week of recognition in the nation for native peoples. This led to 1986 with then President Ronald Reagan proclaiming November 23-30, 1986, as "American Indian Week".

This commemorative month aims to provide a platform for Native people in the United States of America to share their culture, traditions, music, crafts, dance, and ways and concepts of life. This gives Na-

tive people the opportunity to express to their community, both city, county and state officials their concerns and solutions for building bridges of understanding and friendship in their local area. Federal Agencies are encouraged to provide educational programs for their employees regarding Native American history, rights, culture and contemporary issues, to better assist them in their jobs and for overall awareness.

History of National Native American Heritage Month
National Native American Month started off as an effort to get a day of appreciation and acknowledgment for the unique contributions made by the first Americans for the growth and establishment of the United States. The effort has now resulted in a whole month being celebrated for that purpose.

Dr. Arthur C. Parker was one of the first supporters of having an American Indian Day. He was a Seneca Indian and the director of the Museum of Arts and Science in Rochester, New York. He was also the one to convince the

Boy Scouts of America to create a day for the Native Americans - the Boy Scouts adopted this day for three days.

In 1915, a plan concerning American Indian Day was formally approved in the annual Congress of the American Indian Association meeting. The president of the American Indian Association, Rev. Sherman Coolidge, called upon the country to observe this day.

The first time American Indian Day was declared was in May 1916. In 1990, a joint resolution was approved by George H.W. Bush, which called for November to be named National American Heritage Month. Declarations like these have been issued since 1994, such as Native American Heritage Month and National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month.

(Some) Facts About Native American Heritage Month and the People It Honors

Right now, there are [574 federally recognized tribes](#) in the United States, with many more working towards recognition. In the U.S., "Native American" is the most common term for

(Continued on page 2)

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

Board of Directors:

President:

Shaun Wilson

Vice-President:

Kelly Aquino, PMP

Treasurer:

Lisa Marie Anselmi, PhD

Secretary:

Merlyn K. Hammer

Members:

Timothy Ecklund

Andrew L. Quigley

Brian W. Thompson, MD

Administrative Staff:

Executive Director:

Michael N. Martin

Administrative Director of Services:

Tracy Zachariah

Director of Finance:

Thomas Strauss

Administrative Coordinator:

Shannon Hill

Program Directors:

Clinic Services

Anna Miller

Community & Cultural Services

Colleen Casali

Economic Empowerment

Colleen Casali

Educational Achievement

Tracy Zachariah (Interim)

Family Preservation & Strengthening

Justine Rose

Foster Care

LaTanya Pitts

Health & Wellness

Star Wheeler

Special Initiatives

Pete Hill

Stages of Life Empowerment Program

Simone Alston

MOVING/CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

If you are planning on moving or changing your address, please contact NACS so we may update our mailing list. Send an email to Newsletter Editor:

gghosen@nacswny.org

(Continued from page 1)

the larger group, but many people prefer to use "American Indian" or "Indigenous American" instead. The [National Museum of the American Indian](#) notes that when referring to these groups, it's best to use the individual tribal name when possible. Recognizing tribal affiliation is one way to honor our nation's rich indigenous culture. When in doubt, ask people what term or tribe name they prefer you use.

When you think of an Indigenous American or Native person, what comes to mind? Photos in history books or images of the first Thanksgiving? Native Americans are much more than that.

In fact, there are over 9 million Native Americans and Native Alaskans living in the United States today. And with 575 federally recognized tribes and many more vying for recognition, there are a vast array of cultures that are as unique as the people they represent. From artwork and books and literature to cuisine and music, there is much to appreciate and learn.

Indigenous People's Day also recognizes Native heritage.

President Joseph Biden was the first to recognize Indigenous People's Day as a National Holiday, now held each year on October 11. For many, it's a counter-celebration to Columbus Day, a federal holiday that falls on the same day.

Columbus did not "discover" the Americas.

When Europe "discovered" the Americas, there were already 50 million Native Americans and Indigenous peoples living there. Of that, 10 million were living in what was to become the United States. To say that Columbus discovered the "new world" disregards the rich cultures and complex societies that had al-

ready existed here for generations by the time Columbus made his way across the ocean.

Native people were forcibly relocated in the early 1800s.

In 1830, [President Andrew Jackson](#) signed the Indian Removal Act, which empowered the federal government to take Native-held land east of Mississippi and forcibly remove Native people from their homes in Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, Florida, and Tennessee, sending them to "Indian territory" located in what is now Oklahoma.

The Trail of Tears marks an integral part of history.

The Trail of Tears was part of a series of forced displacements of approximately 60,000 Native Americans between 1830 and 1850. Nearly 4,000 people died of disease, exposure and malnutrition during that time. To recognize and remember their history, you can walk parts of the Trail of Tears in Springfield, Missouri.

Native people have many unique languages.

There are approximately [175 Indigenous languages spoken in the United States](#) today.

Football teams are changing offensive names.

In 2020, The Washington Redskins changed their name to [The Washington Football Team](#), dropping the previous moniker "Redskins," a derogatory term often used for those of Native American descent. The Cleveland Indians followed suit and are now known as the [Cleveland Guardians](#).

Navajo people were crucial during the WWII effort.

During World War II, the United States government enlisted the help of skilled Native Americans, known

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

as code talkers, who used the Navajo language to transmit top-secret information to allied forces. Much of this information was classified until 2002 when Congress passed the [Code Talkers Recognition Act](#). Overall, some tribes [had as much as 70% participation in the war effort](#).

Native Americans are responsible for cultivating some of our most important crops.

In 2016, it was estimated that as much as [60 percent of what we eat today](#) was originally domesticated by Native Americans. For instance, corn was cultivated and farmed first by indigenous tribes in Mexico. By the time Europeans arrived in the Americas, Native Americans had been growing corn for thousands of years.

We owe our Constitution to the

Iroquois (Haudenosaunee).

It's not just goods we use daily that we owe to Native innovation. Historians believe the United States Constitution was modeled after the "The Great Law of Peace," the constitution that governed the Iroquois Confederacy. Benjamin Franklin was said to have studied it in detail as inspiration for the Constitution we adhere to today.

Controversy

On October 31, 2019, President Donald Trump also proclaimed November 2019 as National American History and Founders Month to celebrate the first European founders and colonizers of America. In a similar fashion to when, on October 13, 2019, President Donald Trump issued a formal proclamation acknowledging Co-

lumbus Day as being the Federal National holiday and not Indigenous Peoples' Day, some journalists suggested National American History and Founders Month is an attempt to subvert attention from National Native American Heritage Month and stifle the indigenous voice by announcing a celebration that can be viewed as opposing and contradictory to what National Native American Heritage Month is supposed to highlight and honor.

Resources:

- [Wikipedia](#)
- [National Today](#)
- [Good Housekeeping](#)



Haudenosaunee: The Impact Of Women

submitted by George T. Ghosen, Editor

Imagine that women have the responsibility to choose all political representatives, removing from office anyone who did not address the wishes and needs of the people while looking to the seventh generation ahead. Imagine women living in a world free from violence committed against them, having the final say in matters of war and peace, and having the absolute right to their own bodies. In this society, imagine that women are also responsible for planning the spiritual ceremonies and have economic independence from men. Haudenosaunee (traditional Iroquois) women have had this authority - and more - for cen-

turies before Europeans came to North America.

Who are the Haudenosaunee?

The Haudenosaunee are an alliance of native nations united for the past several hundred years by complementary traditions, beliefs and cultural values. Sometimes referred to as the Iroquois Confederacy or Six Nations, the Haudenosaunee originally consisted of the **Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca** nations. The Tuscarora migrated from the south and peacefully joined the Confederacy in the early 1700's, bringing to six the number of

nations united by Haudenosaunee traditional law. (See *History: Birth of a Nation* - <https://www.onondaganation.org/history/>)

The Strength of Haudenosaunee Women

The strength of Haudenosaunee women on history can be seen from the battlefields to the women's rights movement and as recent as Standing Rock.

It was the Haudenosaunee political structure that in part gave America's Founding Fathers the idea to form a republic.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

lic. The flaw in their system was excluding women from decision-making and power. The women of the Haudenosaunee gave a balance to the power structure that the U.S. lacked, and some say still lacks today.

Haudenosaunee women's strength and power is not relegated to distant history. During the Oka Crisis in the early 1990s, when a golf course expansion was threatening Mohawk lands, it was Ellen Gabriel who was selected by the People of the Longhouse to be their spokesperson. After the crisis Gabriel became a teacher at the Mohawk Immersion school in Akwesasne, Quebec. In 2004 Gabriel was elected to the Quebec Native Women's Association.

At Standing Rock there was a presence of Haudenosaunee women. In August, some of the women spoke at camp, sharing their views and offering support. On this same trip a young Tuscarora woman would sing powerful songs under a full moon at Red Warrior Camp.

On the evening of November 20, a group of men and women were getting ready to leave and go back home after their trip of bringing supplies. This was the night that the water protectors got sprayed with water in freezing temperatures and shot with rubber bullets. According to Hickory Edwards, Onondaga, it was a Haudenosaunee woman who gave the men the orders to go to the front line. Without question, they did. Edwards told Indian Country Media Network

(ICMN), "Once things started to get really out of hand she told us we're not leaving. That we had to go up to the front, so that's what we did."

Lisa Latocha, Oneida, says, "The strength of the Haudenosaunee women is legendary. I've seen it since I was a little girl, even though I didn't quite know it. Our mothers instill it in us since birth. I never realized that my mother was constantly preparing me for the world outside my bubble. Life is tough, but even more so if you're a minority woman. Recently, a group of us from the confederacy attended the Women's March on Washington, where I witnessed a crowd of thousands part to watch us walk by behind our purple and white flag."

Where equality wasn't historically present, the Haudenosaunee women fought for it. In the seventeenth century, Haudenosaunee women staged one of the first known feminist rebellions on the continent, using their authority over familial and agricultural life to gain veto power over all wars. Their success gave them equal voices in matters of the defense, a field that, even in the contemporary US, is largely male dominated.

When colonialists arrived and began interacting with Indigenous people, they were troubled to find Haudenosaunee women negotiating treaties, and asked that they be removed from

interactions. However, unlike in European cultures where women rarely even had rights to their own property, Haudenosaunee women had to approve any negotiation involving land.

Haudenosaunee Women's Influence on the Suffragists

Leaders of the women's suffragist movement, like Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Matilda Joselyn Gage, and Lucretia Mott were heavily influenced by the powerful roles Native women played in Haudenosaunee communities.

In 1848, [Lucretia Mott and her husband visited the Seneca people](#), where they experienced firsthand how political power was shared equally among everyone in society. When Mott traveled back to New York, she shared the stories about her experience and how Native women played important roles in their communities.

Stanton likewise noted that "the women were the great power" in their societies and among many Native communities "the descent of property and children were in the female line." This was in stark contrast to the position women held in Eurocentric communities and demonstrated that an alternate form of society was possible.

Matilda Joselyn Gage was also influenced by the Haudenosaunee's matriarchal forms of power. She wrote that "[the modern world \[is\] indebted for its first conception of inherent rights](#), natural equality of condition, and the establishment of

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

a civilized government upon this basis” to the Haudenosaunee. [Gage was also an advocate for Native Americans' rights](#) and frequently criticized the US government for disenfranchising its indigenous people.

The realities of the Haudenosaunee women and their social, political, and economic forms of power inspired visions of what other women might gain, inspiring the blossoming suffragist movement.

Women's Rights

When women in New York State began to organize for their rights in 1848, they took their cue from the nearby native communities. Haudenosaunee women ignited the revolutionary vision of early feminists by providing a model of freedom and agency. Euro-American women were inspired by the Native American women's control of their bodies and property, religious voice, custody of their children, satisfying work, and absence of rape and domestic violence. Finally, they saw political equality in action, as clan mothers nominated the chiefs, held them in position, and removed them, if necessary. Everyone had a voice in decisions, women and men equally.

It is important to remember the women who inspired the women's suffrage movement. While many point to the great work done by suffragists like Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the other organizers of the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, [Dr. Sally Roesch Wagner \(PhD\)](#),

author of *Sisters in Spirit*, points to their source of inspiration for gender equality, the Haudenosaunee matriarchy.

The early suffragists had many formal and informal connections and interactions with the people of the Six Nations Confederacy, often referred to as the Iroquois but who self-identity as the Haudenosaunee or “The People of the Longhouse.” Dr. Roesch Wagner (PhD) illustrates the similarities between the Triumvirate's idea of a matriarchate and the structure of Haudenosaunee social organization.

In her book *Sisters in Spirit*, Roesch Wagner suggests the early suffragists “believed women's liberation was possible because they knew liberated women, women who possessed rights beyond their wildest imagination: Haudenosaunee women.” In the U.S. women can now own property, vote, run for office, and maintain custody of their children in the case of divorce. All successes made possible by both the famed suffragists and their inspiration the Haudenosaunee women, who are often forgotten in our narrative on women's suffrage.

Despite the many victories suffragists and feminists have won for women in the U.S., success has been uneven and incomplete especially for women of color, and the Native women who inspired the goals of the suffragists. In 2018, Deb Haaland (NM-01) and Sharice Davids (KS-03) became the first Na-

tive American women elected to Congress. Although nearly five million Native women living in the U.S. only two have ever served in the House of Representatives and none have served in the Senate.

Ongoing Discrimination Against Native Women

Yet despite the enormous impact Native women had on the suffragist's goals and ideals, they were explicitly excluded from the movement.

Early suffragists made an explicit choice to exclude Black and brown women from their work and prioritize the rights of white women alone. As a result, when the 19th amendment was finally ratified, Native women still lacked the right to vote.

In 1924, the Indian Citizenship Act granted US citizenship to Native Americans, but since Congress allowed each state to choose who had the right to vote it took another forty years for Native Americans across the US to obtain the right to vote.

To this day, Native American voters are still limited from accessing the ballot. That's why it's crucial that we pass legislation like the [John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act](#), which would protect voters against discriminatory practices.

Resources:

- [New York Heritage](#)
- [Onondaga Nation](#)
- [ICT](#)
- [Medium](#)
- [League Of Women Voters](#)

A History of Military Service: Native Americans in the U.S. Military Yesterday and Today

By Danielle DeSimone, *USO*, November 8, 2021

Native Americans serve in the United States' Armed Forces at [five times the national average](#). For a community that has persevered through decades of challenges, Native Americans – also called American Indians – have remained steadfast in their defense of the United States as members of the Armed Forces for centuries. And while Native Americans have a long and complicated history of serving in the U.S. military, it is also a proud one.

Here is a look at Native American contributions to the military, throughout history and today.

Native Americans Have a Long History of Service

Native Americans have served in the U.S. military in every major conflict for more than 200 years. From the battlefields of the Revolutionary War, to [the beaches of Normandy on D-Day](#) to the front lines of today, American Indians and Alaska Native people have defended this country for centuries. Native Americans were even instrumental in the unification of the United States – [Gen. Ely S. Parker](#), a member of the Seneca Nation, served as Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's military secretary during the Civil War, and Parker would eventually write the final draft of the Confederate terms of surrender.

Years later, of the 42,000 Native Americans who served in the Vietnam War, [90% of them were volunteers](#). Regardless of the role, Native Americans have always been present and ready to step up when duty calls.

Navajo Code Talkers Were Crucial to U.S. Victory in World War II

(Photo credit U.S. Marines)

In recent years, [the Navajo Code Talkers](#) have become legendary for creating a special code using their indigenous language to transmit sensitive information during World War II. The Navajo people's unique and largely unwritten language made it an ideal fit for creating a code, and 29 Navajo men initially joined the Marine Corps for this highly sensitive operation. By the end of the war, there were approximately 400 Native Code Talkers in the military from the Navajo, Cherokee, Choctaw, Lakota, Meskwaki and Comanche tribes, all translating encrypted messages in their native tongues from the front lines in real time as they received them.

Although Japanese forces were incredibly adept at breaking codes throughout the war, they never broke the Navajo Code. It was this code that [helped the United States win the war](#) in the Pacific in 1945.



Corp. Henry Bake, Jr. and Pvt. 1st Class George H. Kirk, Navajo Code Talkers, operate a portable radio set in a clearing they've just hacked in the dense jungle close behind the front lines.

Native American Service Members and Civilians Contributed to the WWII War Effort

(Photo credit National Archives and Records Administration)

Aside from the code talkers of WWII, many other Native Americans contributed to the war effort. **Of the 350,000 American Indians living in the country at the time, nearly [45,000 of them enlisted in the Armed Forces](#), making them the demographic with the highest rate of voluntary enlistment in the military throughout the entire war.** In certain Tribal Nations, 70% of the men of a single Nation enlisted.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

From those [who served on the beaches of Normandy](#) to [Cpl. Ira Hayes](#) of the Pima people, who was one of the six Marines who famously erected the American flag on Iwo Jima, American Indians were a part of some of the most important moments of WWII.

If they did not serve directly on the front lines, they served in other ways as well – 65,000 Native Americans left their homes to work in factories to support the war industry. Many more purchased war bonds and donated to charities that supported service members.



Flag raising on Iwo Jima, February 23, 1945.

Native American Women Have Answered the Call to Serve for Years

(Photo credit White House photo by Andrea Hanks)

Like many women in our nation's history, American Indian women first supported American war efforts as nurses. In World War I, [a handful of Native American women volunteered to join](#) the Army Nurse Corps; they, like the approximately 15,000 Native American men who served in the military during WWI, were not even American citizens (citizenship would not be granted to Indian Nations until 1924 with [the passing of the Indian Citizenship Act](#)), but they still chose to join.

In World War II, the numbers of female volunteers would grow – [800 Native American women joined the war effort](#) in the various [women's branches of the military](#) formed during WWII, including WACS, WAVES, Women Marines, SPARs and WASPs. 10,000 more would join the Red Cross.

Today, Native American women not only serve as fully capable members of our Armed Forces, but also serve at a much higher rate than all other demographics. Almost [20% of all Native American service members are women](#), compared to the approximately 15% of all other service members who are women.

Native Americans in the U.S. Military Today

In our modern U.S. military today, American Indians and Native Alaskans have carried on a tradition of service and sacrifice, as they serve at a higher rate than any other demographic in the entire country. Since September 11, almost [19% of all Native Americans have served in the Armed Forces](#) – in comparison to an average of 14% of all other ethnicities.

Regardless of the challenge, Native American service members have stepped up to serve the United States with distinction, dedicating their lives to protecting this country no matter the cost.

Mitchelene BigMan, president and founder of the Native American Women Warriors (NAWW), performs a tribal dance for attendees of the National American Indian Heritage Month observance at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, in November 2019. Big-Man was there with two other members of the NAWW, an all-female group of Native American veterans who started as a color guard but have since grown and branched out as advocates for Native American women veterans in areas such as health, education and employment. | Photo credit Stephen Baack/DVIDS



Chief Warrant Office Two Misty Dawn Lakota (Oglala Lakota) takes part in the White House Conference on Supporting Contemporary Native American Veterans in 2019.



(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

Post-Vietnam to present day

As of November 2021, the total number of men and women who serve in the military on active duty numbered more than 24,000. This includes both "American Indian and Alaskan Native." Additionally, "more than 183,000 veterans identify as American Indian or Alaskan Native."

Native Americans have participated in the armed forces throughout conflicts in the Middle East. During one mission, Operation Enduring Freedom, which took place in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2014, "some 30 American Indians and Alaska Natives were killed and 188 wounded." Also, "43 American Indians died while 344 were wounded in Operation Iraqi Freedom which lasted from 2003–2010.

Some specific units had some of the "highest proportion of American Indians," such as the 120th Engineer Combat Battalion at 20 percent.

[Lori Piestewa](#), who was a member of the 507th Maintenance Company, was killed in combat in Iraq in 2003. She was also part of the Hopi Tribe. She became a beacon of "peace and unity" to her people and others. Squaw Peak in Arizona was renamed Piestewa Peak after her. There is also an annual event which is named in memory of her: Lori Piestewa National Native American Games.

In September 2004, the 120th Engineer Combat Battalion received permission to help organize an official powwow. This occurred in Iraq. soldiers, both Native and non-Native participated in traditional Native American games. They even made a drum from an old oil drum. This powwow was the "first one ever known to be a full-blown powwow in a combat zone."

Every day, America's service members selflessly put their lives on the line to keep us safe and free. Please take a moment to let our troops know how much we appreciate their service and sacrifice.

Resources:

- [USO](#)
- [Wikipedia](#)

Healing Totem Pole Raised to Honor Indian Boarding Schools Victims

By Levi Rickert, Native News Online, October 24, 2023

ANCHORAGE - Braving frigid temperatures, members of Alaska Native communities took the concept "it takes a village to raise a child" to a different level on Sunday, Oct. 22, when a crowd of more than 500 gathered to raise a totem pole dedicated to healing from the Indian boarding school era.

U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary Deb Haaland and Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Bryan Newland joined the crowd as it raised The Boarding School Totem Pole after Sunday's "Road to Healing" listening session at the Alaska Native Heritage Center

in Anchorage. Other attendees included members of the Interior Department's team that has assisted along the Road to Healing tour, as well as Deborah Parker, chief operating officer of the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition, and Shelly Lowe, chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The Boarding School Healing Totem Pole is the first totem pole dedicated to Indian boarding school survivors, descendants, and ancestors who did not return home. The totem pole was carved

this year at the Alaska Native Heritage Center by Haida master carvers Gidaawaan Joe Young and Sgwaayaans T.J. Young. The concept of this special pole was brought forth by Haida Elder Norma Jean



(Photos/Levi Rickert for Native News Online)

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)



Photos/Levi Rickert for Native News Online



Interior Secretary Deb Haaland assisted with blessing the healing totem pole.



Photos/Levi Rickert for Native News Online

Dunne (Haida/Tsimshian). Haaland and other women, including teen females, blessed the healing totem pole before it was raised. Newland helped Alaska Native men carry the totem pole from where it was

carved to the spot it was raised.

The healing totem depicts Bear mother who can be seen clutching her two cubs while the father (in human

form) sits above her, embedded in a raven's tail. Above him, the raven is mid-transformation, at a place in between a human and a raven form. Two children rest comfortably in raven's ears.

November is National Adoption Month

submitted by LaTanya Pitts, Director - Foster Care

November is National Adoption Month. It is the month when the broader community acknowledges the efforts of those whose lives have been impacted by adoption and who facilitate the process. This month helps spread awareness and encourages all of us to learn about adoption. This month celebrates all of the amazing selfless parents who have committed to ensuring stability for children through adoption and the dedicated workers who aided in the process. **NACS has proudly assisted in the adoptions of 9 children this year! Hat's off to our amazing foster parents for providing permanency to the youth in their care!**

National Adoption Month is an initiative of the Children's Bureau that seeks to increase national awareness of adoption issues. www.childwelfare.gov/adoptionmonth.com

Ways that you can support National Adoption Month:

1. Support a friend or family member who is adopting. Send a note to someone adopting to let them know you're thinking of them and supporting their family.
2. Attend an event to learn about adoption. Join an event in your community to learn about adoption and hear from birth parents, adoptive parents, and/or adoptees!
3. Spread the word! Share information about adoption with your community on social media: Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter including how to adopt and the children waiting for adoption!
4. Volunteer with a foster care or adoption organization. Many non-profit organizations couldn't fulfill their mission without the help of dedicated and passionate volunteers!
5. Fundraise for an adoptive family or adoption organization. Adoptive families are often responsible for many different adoption expenses and their non-profit adoption agencies want to keep adoption as affordable as possible. Donate today to your favorite child-welfare organization or a family who is adopting!
6. Encourage your office to offer adoption benefits. Adoption benefits are not universally available to new adoptive parents. Encourage your company to be recognized as an [Adoption-Friendly Workplace](#) by the Dave Thomas Foundation.
7. Write about your experience or connection to adoption. Bring attention to adoption by writing about your experience or connection to adoption on a blog or social media!! Spence-Chapin

(Continued on page 10)

wants to you to [share your story](#) on their blog!

8. Become a certified foster parent with NACS. Learn the certification process, understand the needs of children in care and embrace the rewarding experience of helping a child in need. Call us at 847-4460! Ask for Tanya or Jennifer!

5 Facts About Adoption:

1. *Adoption statistic in U.S. families*

One out of every 25 families with children have an adopted child.

2. *Adopted Americans*

Around 7 million Americans are adopted.

3. *Average waiting time for getting adopted*

The time an average child waits for an adoptive family is more than three years.

4. *Adoption agencies in the U.S.*

The U.S. has more adoption agencies than any other country.

5. *International adoptions*

Americans adopt children globally, although the numbers have declined since 2018.

Resource:

- [National Today](#)

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SERVICES



Become A Foster Parent

HELP ERIE AND NIAGARA COUNTY YOUTH WHO NEED A SAFE
AND LOVING HOME BY BECOMING A FOSTER PARENT

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
CONTACT JENNIFER FRAPPA (716) 574-8940



NATIVE AMERICAN
COMMUNITY SERVICES



GLOBAL CENTER FOR APPLIED
HEALTH RESEARCH



SEEKING PARENTS OR GUARDIANS

American Indian/Alaska Native Parenting & Health Research Study

Eligibility

- ▶ Self-identify as American Indian or Alaska Native & live in urban area
- ▶ Primary caregiver of American Indian or Alaska Native youth age 12-17

TO REGISTER

- ✉ pjacobs@nacswny.org
- 716-339-1831/
- 716-874-4460

SIGN UP NOW

- Child Care Provided
- Culturally Grounded Parenting Support Lessons
- Parent/Family Intervention Skills
- Learn how to address 'High Risk' behaviors in teens
- Engaging Workshops with fun activities
- 10 week cycle commitment 1 x per week

By Participating, your family becomes eligible for up to \$200 in gift  cards!



Empower yourself by Empowering others



Please join us for a
**NATIVE AMERICAN
COMMUNITY SERVICES
HOLIDAY
PARTY!**




**PANCAKE BREAKFAST, PICTURES WITH
SANTA, GIFT DEPOT REGISTRATION**



NIAGARA COUNTY DECEMBER 2

11am-1pm


1010 Michigan Ave., Niagara Falls
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Contact Colleen Casali to register
716-548-1348 or cacasali@nacswny.org



ERIE COUNTY DECEMBER 9

11am-1pm

1005 Grant St (NACS Buffalo)
Contact Star Wheeler to register
(716)983-1251 or swheeler@nacswny.org



**PRE-REGISTER
BY NOVEMBER 27!**



YOU ARE INVITED!!

DIGITAL EQUITY & COMMUNITY RESOURCE event

**Saturday, November 18, 2023
10 am – 1 pm**

**At Native American Community Services
1005 Grant St., Buffalo NY 14207**

Save Money for
Internet Services -
Come learn about the
Affordable Connectivity
Program!



Enhance your computer
skills for Internet
searching, cyber security
& more!

Learn how to obtain discounts when purchasing laptops & tablets!
Apply to receive a new tablet!



Hear about NACS' NEW PROGRAMS such as the
Parenting in Two Worlds Project,
Indigenous Peer Education Project, All Our
Relations Racial Healing Circles, Indigenous
Health and Wellbeing Program, and more!

Free Door Prizes!



Free coffee, tea &
breakfast snacks!
No registration needed!



*This event is supported by the "Weaving
Our Web" grant from the National Urban
Indian Family Coalition, as well as
private foundations, businesses, and
caring individuals, like you!*



ERIE AND NIAGARA YOUTH CLUBHOUSES

Clubhouse Locations (select days):

Erie County: 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14207

Niagara County: 1522 Main Street, Niagara Falls, 14305

ABOUT NACS CLUBHOUSE:

NACS Youth Clubhouses are an alcohol and drug free space for Native youth ages 12-17.

Native youth are welcome to join our drop-in days. The clubhouses are open in the evenings during the school year. Snacks and dinners are provided for youth!



FOR UPDATES ON EVENTS, UPDATED SCHEDULES, AND CURRENT SCHEDULES SCAN OUR QR CODE OR FOLLOW OUR INSTAGRAM! @NACS_CLUBHOUSE



POSITIVE OUTLETS

- MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD
- ONE ON ONE SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE
- SAFE AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT
- LEARN FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY WITH CLUB BUCKS!

CLUBHOUSE PERKS

YOUTH HANGOUTS

- ALL NACS CLUBHOUSE LOCATION PROVIDES:
- POOL TABLE
 - DARTS
 - MOVIE/GAME NIGHTS
 - GUEST SPEAKERS
 - FIELD TRIPS
 - DINNER/SNACKS
 - TRANSPORTATION



CULTURAL IMPACTS

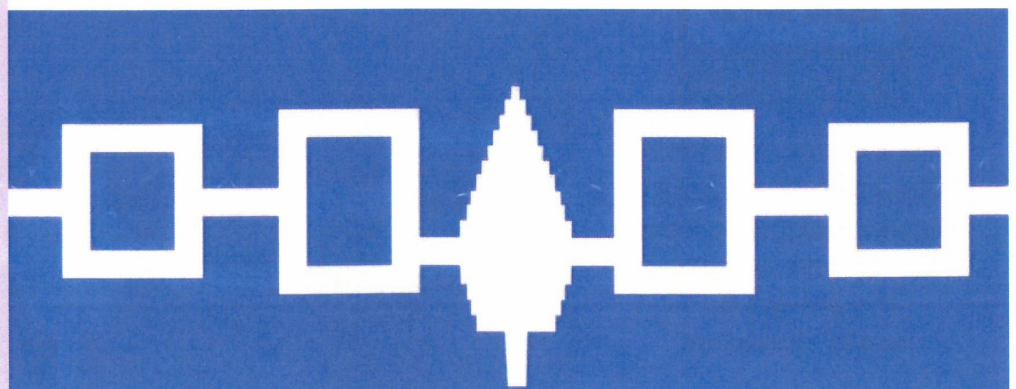
- LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING OPPORTUNITIES
- SOCIAL DANCES / HISTORY OF SOCIAL DANCING
- CULTURAL & EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS



For more information, please contact:

Hillary Beaudouin, Erie County Clubhouse Manager: (716) 449-6472
Kashmir Bowser, Niagara County Clubhouse Manager: (716) 449-6405

Funded By: The Office of Addiction Services and Supports, foundations, businesses, and caring individuals





Native American Community Services Program Offerings through the Stages of Life Empowerment (SOLE) Program



The following programs can be conducted throughout a variety of venues in **Erie and Niagara Counties** for FREE, including but not limited to schools, youth programs, family nights, parent events, etc. Please contact **SOLE Program Director Simone Alston** at **716-983-2564** or sshuster@nacswny.org for more information.

All programs can be adapted to meet your group's specific needs

Target Population	Program Name	Program Description	Implementation Guidelines
EVIDENCE-BASED CURRICULA FOR YOUTH			
<i>*These curricula have undergone rigorous scientific evaluations that have shown their effectiveness*</i>			
<i>*Ask about our other Evidence Based Programs*</i>			
Youth, Ages 11-13	<i>Making Proud Choices!</i>	Evidence-Based Curriculum that provides youth with a comprehensive approach to gain the confidence and skills necessary to reduce their risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV and pregnancy.	-Eight, 50 minute sessions -Out-of-school setting
Youth, Ages 13-18	<i>Be Proud! Be Responsible!</i>	Evidence-Based Curriculum that provides youth with a comprehensive approach to gain the knowledge, motivation and skills necessary to change their behaviors in ways that will reduce their risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV and pregnancy.	-Seven 50 minute sessions -In Various settings
YOUTH WORKSHOPS			
<i>*Workshops Available upon request: Financial Budgeting, Effective communication, Barrier Demonstrations, Consent, etc.*</i>			
Youth, Ages 10-18	<i>A Youth's Guide to Adolescent Development</i>	Helps youth understand the changes they undergo during adolescence, and pays special attention to developing one's positive identity, building a strong self-esteem, fostering a healthy body image and encourages respect for racial and ethnic diversity.	-Approximately one 45 minute session -Various settings
Youth, Ages 10-18	<i>Female Puberty: We All Go Through It!</i>	Walks young females through the biological changes they will encounter during puberty with special attention on anatomy, hygiene and menstruation. <i>*Recommended workshop prior to Evidence-Based Curricula*</i>	-Approximately one 45 minute session -Various settings
Youth, Ages 10-18	<i>Male Puberty: What to Expect</i>	Walks young males through the biological changes they will encounter during puberty with special attention to one's anatomy and hygiene. <i>*Recommended workshop prior to Evidence-Based Curricula*</i>	-Approximately one 45 minute session -Various settings
Youth, Ages 10-18	<i>A Youth's Guide to Healthy Relationships</i>	Allows youth to explore the basics of healthy relationships (romantic and platonic) and provides insight to keep their current relationships healthy.	-Approximately one 45 minute session - Various settings
Youth, Ages 10-18	<i>Safer Sext: Online Safety, Privacy, and Digital Intimacy</i>	Offers youth helpful tips about safe social media, as they begin to use social media more frequently highlighting the consequences of sexting, sexual harassment, and cyber bullying.	-Approximately one 45 minute session - Various settings
Youth, Ages 10-18	<i>Skills for a Healthy Life</i>	Focuses on the importance of healthy life skills, as they are the building blocks for overall health and wellness. Special attention is paid to decision making skills, interpersonal skills and stress management.	-Approximately one 45 minute session -Various settings
Youth, Ages 10-18	<i>You Have Rights: Minors' Rights to Reproductive Health Care</i>	Provides an overview of minors' rights in accessing sexual and reproductive health care services in New York State. Many youth are unaware that they do not need parental consent to receive these services.	-Approximately one 45 minute session -Various settings
Youth, Ages 10-18	<i>A Youth's Guide to Boundaries</i>	Offers youth the helpful tools to establish consent and create and enforce boundaries in a relationship.	-Approximately one 45 minute session -Various settings

Funded by Native American Community Services, businesses, foundations, and caring individuals.

Continued on Page 16

Youth, Ages 10-18	A Youth's Guide to Anti-Bullying	Allows youth to explore types of bullying and provides insight to its consequences.	-Approximately one 45 minute session -Various settings
Youth, Ages 10-18	Period Care	Offers insight to what to expect throughout menstruation, as well as personal hygiene.	-Approximately one 45 minute session -Various settings
Youth, Ages 10-18	Budgeting	Allows youth to brainstorm ways to reduce spending and discuss the purpose of saving.	-Approximately one 45 minute session -Various settings
Youth, Ages 10-18	LGBTQ Cultural Competency	Explores inclusive ways to talk about sex, gender, and sexual orientation while exploring terminology and concepts within LGBTQ populations.	-Approximately one 45 minute session -Various settings
Youth, Ages 10-18	Clinic Tours	This is an opportunity for youth to receive free scheduled tours and education of their local reproductive health clinics and facilities in order to reduce any associated stigma with receiving services. We pick you and your youth group up and drop you off!	-Groups of 5 or more -Approximately one-two hours -By Request only-Call for further info. -In clinic setting
	Clinic Transportation	We offer (youth) group's transportation to and from clinics and health care facilities for appointments in order to eliminate obstacles that prevent youth from being healthy.	

Adult workshops available upon request, please contact for more information



Peer Educators Empowering People

Please contact Laura Gugliuzza, lgugliuzza@nacswny.org, to apply or for more information.

- **Peer Mentoring Program:** The Peer Mentoring Program selects 6 high school students, ages 14-18, from Erie and Niagara counties through an interview process. Our Peer Educators work to connect with their communities, lead and assist workshops, and develop personal and professional skills through events, outreach, and trainings.
- **Peer to Peer Workshops:** Our peer educators are available to lead any of the youth workshops offered by the SOLE program.
- **PSA viewing and discussion:** Our peer educators have written and starred in their own series of PSA videos on a variety of topics related to healthy living. The Peer Educators are available to lead discussions on these videos, which include topics of bullying, microaggressions, STDs, pregnancy, communication, condom use, suicide prevention, and many more!



MOCA is a participatory, discussion-based program, developed by our Peer Educators, which aims to provide teens the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make responsible decisions regarding sexual health, understand identities, and empower their peers to do the same. This program consists of a series of 6 discussion sessions and clinic tour.

Condom Availability Program

Free condoms and other barrier methods are available for you or your organization, provided via pick up or drop off. Contact Simone Alston or contact us on our social media for availability.

Period Pouch Program

Free Period Starter Pouches are available for you or your organization, provided via pick up or drop off. Contact Simone Alston or contact us on our social media for availability.

Social Media



Funded by Native American Community Services, businesses, foundations, and caring individuals.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



A Tradition of Caring

Services we provide:

- ⇒ Case management/career counseling
- ⇒ Job search and placement assistance
- ⇒ Assistance in identifying employment barriers
- ⇒ Occupational skills training/skills upgrade
- ⇒ Interview preparation
- ⇒ Resume writing assistance
- ⇒ Educational resources and information
- ⇒ Resources for entrepreneurs
- ⇒ Referrals and Linkages to other services
- ⇒ Status card/Tribal documentation assistance

Funding Available to Eligible Native Americans for:

- * Work Experience Positions
- * On-the-job Training
- * Tuition/Books/Educational Support
- * Work Clothes/Tools
- * Training/Certification Programs
- * Other Supportive Services

For more information and/or
to make an appointment, contact:
Native American Community Services

Buffalo Office
716-574-9731

Rochester Office
585-514-3984

Syracuse Office
315-322-8754

We have offices in
Buffalo, Niagara Falls, Lockport,
Rochester and Syracuse

Counties we serve:

Erie, Niagara, Orleans, Genesee,
Wyoming, Monroe, Livingston,
Wayne, Ontario, Yates, Seneca,
Cayuga, Oswego, Onondaga,
Cortland, Oneida, Madison

Funded by the US Department of Labor

Native American Community Services Workforce Development Services



Native American Community Services has a workforce development program that offers employment and education services to the Native American community in Erie and Niagara Counties. The following is a list of services that are available to eligible participants which includes limited financial assistance related to...

Services provided to eligible participants:

• Case Management related to workforce activities	• Educational resources and information
• Assistance in identifying barriers to employment	• Tuition/Book assistance
• Career counseling/exploration	• Entrepreneurial/small business technical assistance training information
• Job search and placement assistance	• Follow-up services
• 6-week work experience program	• Referral and linkage services
• Resume/Cover letters and interview assistance	• Status Card/Tribal documentation assistance
• Occupational skills training/Skills upgrade	• Supportive Services
• On-the-job training	• Supplemental Youth Services

The following are requirements needed to qualify as an eligible participant:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 14 years of age or older ❖ Reside on/off the reservation in our service area ❖ Native American, Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian ❖ Tribal documentation of enrollment in a federal or state recognized tribe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Males 18+ have registered with Selective Service ❖ Unemployed or under-employed ❖ Laid-off, furloughed or dislocated workers ❖ Veteran or Spouse of Veteran ❖ Meet all WIOA eligibility guidelines |
|---|--|

We provide these services to Native Americans living in the following counties of New York State:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erie • Niagara • Orleans • Genesee • Wyoming • Livingston • Monroe • Wayne • Ontario | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yates • Seneca • Cayuga • Oswego • Onondaga • Cortland • Oneida • Madison |
|--|--|

Native American Community Services
1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14207
(716) 874-4460

Food Pantry Guidelines

OPEN:

Tuesday 10:00am – 1:00pm

Wednesday 10:00am – 1:00pm



Required Documents:

- Must live in the [14207 or 14216](#) zip code
- Must have [Picture ID](#)
- Must have [ID for everyone](#) in household
- Must have [proof of address](#) (current utility bill)



*****If you are a NEW client you must come in before 12 noon*****

*****Please note that clients may come to the pantry one (1) time each calendar month and they may receive service from ONLY one (1) food pantry.*****



Our organization is here to provide families with a supplemental food base. These supplemental items, when combined with your own provisions, help stretch each family meal. We provide service for numerous families each month and strive to treat each client with fairness and respect. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding of our policies.

Job Posting



NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SERVICES OF ERIE & NIAGARA COUNTIES, INC.

1005 Grant Street ● Buffalo, NY 14207-2854 ● (716) 874-4460 ● Fax (716) 874-1874
1522 Main Street ● Niagara Falls, NY 14305 ● (716) 299-0914 ● Fax (716) 299-0903
76 West Avenue ● Lockport, NY 14094 ● (716) 302-3035 ● Fax (716) 302-3037
100 College Avenue, Suite 200 ● Rochester, NY 14607 ● (585) 514-3984
960 James Street ● Syracuse, NY 13203 ● (315) 322-8754

Equal Opportunity Employer

Position: Family Preservation Caseworker

Type: Full-Time Hourly / Non-Exempt

Salary/ Range: \$19.23 / hour

Office: Erie County

Summary

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

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS

- Bachelor's degree in human service or related field of study required with experience in child welfare.
- Knowledge of ICWA, ASFA, Federal and State regulations, as well as mandated reporting requirements.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements.
- Must have clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300K.
- Intermediate computer skills and understanding of office applications including MS Office Suite.
- Interpersonal skills to work cooperatively and effectively with individuals, groups, and diverse populations.
- Knowledge of local Native American communities.

BENEFITS

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

For consideration send Resume to: humanresources@nacswny.org

Job Posting



NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SERVICES OF ERIE & NIAGARA COUNTIES, INC.

1005 Grant Street ● Buffalo, NY 14207-2854 ● (716) 874-4460 ● Fax (716) 874-1874
1522 Main Street ● Niagara Falls, NY 14305 ● (716) 299-0914 ● Fax (716) 299-0903
76 West Avenue ● Lockport, NY 14094 ● (716) 302-3035 ● Fax (716) 302-3037
100 College Avenue, Suite 200 ● Rochester, NY 14607 ● (585) 514-3984
Syracuse Office: TBD

Equal Opportunity Employer

Position: Workforce Development Specialist

Type: Hourly / Non-Exempt

Salary/ Range: \$19.00 / hour

Office: Buffalo (Travel Required)

Summary :

The Workforce Development Specialist assists in planning and implementing goals and objectives of the Workforce Development Component as well as ensuring quality of service provision to clients. Incumbent will be flexible to evening and weekend schedules. All efforts will be performed with understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind Principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Conducts Initial intake and comprehensive testing to determine client eligibility and needs.
- Develops an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) with client.
- Develops and provides workshops to clients in such areas of academic, life skills, and technical areas.
- Keeps abreast of current trends in the local job market.
- Establishes an effective support network and provides referrals for clients.
- Attends and participates in weekly component staff and other required meetings.
- Maintains necessary documentation and ensures the timely completion of all necessary recordkeeping.
- Develops an outreach action plan to successfully recruit and retain participants and employers into the program.
- Conducts outreach to academic entities, unions, coalitions, service providers, and other individuals/agencies to promote services, develop linkages, build network opportunities and advocate for issues in the Native American Community.
- Develops and nurtures relationships with employers for on-the-job training agreements and work experience opportunities for clients.
- Other duties as assigned

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS

- Bachelor's degree in human service or related field of study preferred, with three (3) years' experience in workforce development including supervision and program management, or a combination of education and work experience
- Knowledge of local area service providers
- Must be able to work remotely and in-person
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements
- Must have clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300K
- Intermediate computer skills and understanding of office applications including MS Office Suite
- Interpersonal skills to work cooperatively and effectively with individuals, groups, and diverse populations
- Knowledge of local Native American communities
- Must be able to lift minimum of 30 lbs.
- Must be able to perform in a smoke-free environment

For Consideration: Send Resume to:

humanresources@nacswny.org

Native American Community Services
of Erie & Niagara Counties, Inc.
1005 Grant Street
Buffalo, New York, 14207

Please share this newsletter with family, friends and co-workers. If you know of anyone who would like to receive NACS News monthly by email, please have them send their first and last name and current email address to:
gghosen@nacswny.org
You can also look for our newsletter on our website:
http://www.nacswny.org/news_and_events.html

YES, I'D LIKE TO HELP NACS CONTINUE ITS TRADITION OF CARING!!

Please accept my contribution of:
 \$5 \$10 \$25 \$50
 \$100 Other: _____

I'd like to volunteer my time. I can...

Name

Address

City / State / Zip Code

Phone

Please add me to your mailing list!

Please detach and return to:
Native American Community Services of Erie & Niagara Counties, Inc.
1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, New York 14207

FUNDED BY: Erie County Department of Social Services; Erie County Youth Bureau; New York State Office of Children & Family Services; New York State Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services; Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo; Niagara County Department of Social Services, Niagara County Office of the Aging; US Department of Labor; Administration for Native Americans (ANA); Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation; The Oishei Foundation; Erie County Department of Mental Health; NYS Research Foundation for Mental Health; NYS Medicaid Program 29-I; Western New York Foundation, as well as businesses, foundations and caring individuals.