



# NACS NEWS

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## National Native American Heritage Month – November 2024

*Submitted by George T. Ghosen, Editor*

Every year on November 1, Native American Heritage Month is celebrated to honor the remarkable Native Americans who have contributed a lot to improve the character of the nation. This month is also referred to as the American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month. November is the time to rejoice in diverse and rich cultures, histories, and traditions and to appreciate the great contributions of the Native Americans. This month allows us to spread awareness about tribes or to educate people about the various challenges faced by the Native Americans in the past and today. Throughout this month, we commit to keep on supporting the remaining Native American tribes and let the world know about their sacrifices.

### History of National Native American Heritage Month

In 1990 Congress passed and President George H. W. Bush signed into law a [joint resolution](#) designating the month of November as the first National American Indian Heritage Month (also known as Native American Indian Month). “American Indians were the original inhabitants of the lands that now constitute the United States of America,” noted H.J. Res. 577. “Native American Indians have made an essential and unique contribution to our Nation” and “to the world.”

Introduced by Hawaii senator [Daniel Inouye](#) and congressional delegate [Eni Faloemavaega](#) of American Samoa, the joint resolution stated that “the President is authorized and requested to issue

a proclamation calling upon Federal, State, and local governments, interested groups and organizations, and the people of the United States to observe the month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.”

In 2008 the commemorative language was amended to also include the contributions of Alaskan Natives. Every year, by statute and/or presidential proclamation, the month of November is recognized as National Native American Heritage Month.

*Information provided by [US Senate](#).*



### Additional History Information:

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

### How to Observe National Native American Heritage Month

#### 1. Learn about the Native Americans.

Native American Heritage Month is an excellent way to learn about the history of American Indians. You can teach your children about the country’s past and how Native Americans have helped America.

#### 2. Visit museums.

You can visit or take your kids to a museum or virtually visit it to show them artifacts and exhibits of the Native Americans’ jewelry, customs, and culture. (i.e. [National Museum of the American Indian](#); [The Buffalo History Museum](#); [Seneca Iro-](#)

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[quois National Museum](#))

### 3. Travel virtually to see other cultures.

There are many cultural videos that you can watch on native culture like “Living Earth Festival”. If you or your kids are interested in learning about the Native American culture find a documentary or movie about it and watch it.

## Why National Native American Heritage Month is Important

### A. They have a rich history.

The Native Americans have been living in America for a very long time. They were not a single nation but included a variety of cultures, nations, and languages. Some people believe that they have been living on the sub-continent for over 30,000 years.

### B. Native Americans have con-

tributed a lot.

There are many contributions made by the Native Americans such as the discovery of edible plants, which are widely eaten by people around the world. They were the first people to raise turkeys, guinea pigs, and honeybees.

### C. They established the government system.

The government of Native Americans serves as the model of federated representative democracy. The government system of the U.S. is based on the system in which the power is distributed amongst the central authority and smaller political units.

*See/Read Also:*

- ⊕ [ULI San Francisco](#)
- ⊕ [Native American Heritage](#)

[Month](#)

- ⊕ [Smithsonian](#)
- ⊕ [National Women's History Alliance](#)
- ⊕ [Twelve Women to Know for Native American Heritage Month](#)

<sup>1</sup> Arthur C. Parker (1881–1955) was among the most important Native American scholars and intellectuals of the twentieth century. Of an ethnically diverse background, he was a complex figure familiar from childhood with both Native American and European American cultures, but not always fully at home in either atmosphere.

*Resources:*

- [National Today](#)
- [Western Washington University](#)
- [Encyclopedia.com](#)

## November is National Adoption Month

From [National Today](#)

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. National Adoption Month celebrates the families who have grown through adoption. It also recognizes the journey of the many children who are still waiting for their destined families. It further highlights the thousands of children worldwide in need of adoption, and how easy it is to make a difference even if you cannot adopt.

### History of National Adoption Month

Every year, there are more and

more children in need of finding secure and safe families. National Adoption Month sheds light on the process and the positive impacts of adoption.

The state of Massachusetts was the first to promote adoption-related efforts in 1976. Governor Mike Dukakis announced the first week of November as “Adoption Week” to promote awareness of the need for adoptive families for children in the foster care system. The idea slowly grew in popularity and spread throughout the nation. Following this, in 1984, President Ronald Reagan made adoption week a national event. As the popularity of this week grew, more states started participating, and it became difficult to fit

all the events into a period of seven days. This was when President Bill Clinton extended the week-long event into a whole month, which came to be known as National Adoption Month, which is celebrated globally.

National Adoption Month is a chance for all — individuals, families, businesses, organizations, communities, states, and the government — to celebrate adoption. Adoption is encouraged as a positive way to grow families and take children out of foster care. Many fundraising drives, recognition dinners, community activities, and awareness campaigns are held all across the nation to observe this month.

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National Adoption Month also includes National Adoption Day, November 20. This day is observed in courthouses all across the country, where thousands of adoptions are finalized simultaneously on the Saturday directly after it. Courts are encouraged to deal with the backlog of adoptions on this day. World Adoption Day is also celebrated in this month, on November 9, and is a global awareness day for this important cause.

### National Adoption Month timeline

#### 1851 - Adoption of Children Act

Adoption of Children Act passes in the state of Massachusetts.

#### 1948 - First Cross-Racial Adoption

The first cross-racial adoption of a black child by white parents takes place in Minnesota.

#### 1970 - Highest Number of Adoptions

The number of adoptions peaks in 1970 with an estimated 175,000 annual adoptions.

#### 2017 - LGBT Adoptions

Adoption by LGBT individuals or same-sex couples is legal in all fifty states as of June 2017.

### National Adoption Month FAQs

#### 1. How many children are adopted each year in the U.S.?

Approximately 150,000 children are adopted in the U.S. each year, with about a third coming through the foster care system.

#### 2. How are families found for children awaiting adoption?

Agencies such as the National Children's Bureau organize partnerships with organizations for awareness campaigns and run a national recruitment campaign to find adoptive parents for children.

#### 3. When is National Adoption Day in the U.S.?

[National Adoption Day](#) is held on November 20 each year in the U.S.

### How To Observe National Adoption Month

#### 1. Attend events in your community

There are many events organized being held across the country during National Adoption Month. Attend local events being organized in your town or city and educate yourself about adoption procedures, laws, and history.

#### 2. Volunteer with an adoption organization

Help out at your local foster care organizations or a children's home during your free time. Even your tiniest efforts can make a huge difference in all these children's lives. You can even mentor a child who is aging out of the foster care system.

#### 3. Share information

Spread awareness about adoption with your friends and family. Encourage your neighborhoods, communities, cities, and states to take a stand on adoption. You can even spread the word via social media by sharing adoption-positive articles and links.

### 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 get-

#### ting 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.

### Why Is National Adoption Month Important?

#### 1. Honor the ones involved in the adoption process

This month allows us to honor families with adopted children and thus make a difference. They are the reasons why adoption is seen as a positive way to grow a family. They inspire many others, who see how beneficial the process is for all those who are involved.

#### 2. Recognition for the children

All children deserve a safe, loving, and supportive environment to grow. This initiative spreads awareness about adoption and sheds light on the hundreds of thousands of children waiting for families.

3. Encourages people to get involved National Adoption Month provides everyone with the opportunity to get involved by encouraging our neighborhoods, communities, cities, and states to take a stand. This month also gives businesses and companies a chance to support adoption.

### Key Statistics (From [Child Information Gateway](#))

As of September 30, 2022, there were nearly 109,000 children waiting to be adopted who were at risk of aging out of foster care

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without permanency. The following are additional statistics about this population:

- More than one in five children waiting for adoption were ages 13–17.
- The average age of all children waiting to be adopted was 7.6 years old.
- The average time in care for all children waiting to be adopted was 34.9 months.
- The average time in care for children waiting to be adopted after termination of parental rights was 19.1 months.

The three racial and ethnic groups

with the largest percentages of children waiting for adoption were White (43 percent), Hispanic (23 percent), and Black or African American (21 percent). Black or African American (non-Hispanic), multiracial (non-Hispanic), and American Indian/Alaska Native (non-Hispanic) children were overrepresented among children waiting to be adopted, as shown by the following data:

- Black or African American children (non-Hispanic) were 14 percent of the U.S. child population but 21 percent of those waiting to be adopted.

- Multiracial children (non-Hispanic) were 5 percent of the U.S. child population but 9 percent of those waiting to be adopted.
- American Indian/Alaska Native children (non-Hispanic) were 1 percent of the U.S. child population but 2 percent of those waiting to be adopted.

By honoring every youth and their network, professionals can work toward an adoption that is meaningful and purposeful, paving the way for healing, well-being, and long-term stability.

## 5 Reasons Why Adoption Is SO Important Here's what I believe...

From [Adoption.com](http://Adoption.com), by Ashley Greeno, March 18, 2020

My heart was broken by the thought of so many children without loving homes, but I had no idea what to do about it. I was young and definitely not ready to start a family of my own. Still, I couldn't shake the feeling that adoption would play an important role in my life. Over the years, I learned about adoption and foster care, and I always wondered if [adopting](#) would be part of my family's story someday. I even worked for the organization, [CASA](#) (Court Appointed Special Advocates) whose mission is to find a safe, loving home for every child! The more I learned and surrounded myself with adoptive parents, the more I realized just how important [adoption](#) is.

Maybe you've had a similar experience. Maybe you find yourself with an unintended pregnancy, or maybe you're brand-new to the conversation and wondering "Why exactly is adoption SO important?" The broad answer I always come

back to is this: people. Lives are impacted by adoption every single day and all over the world. My hope is that the more we learn and communicate, the better we will all be at navigating this difficult journey.

There are a lot of reasons adoption is important! Too many to list actually, but I did make a list of the top five. Spoiler alert: they're all about people and relationships. Adoption is such a delicate undertaking with so many lives and emotions on the line. You'll see in this list that the value of all parties is extremely important, but the child is always the top priority. If we all are able to place the child's needs at the very front of every decision, I believe our families, lives, relationships, and communities will all be much stronger!

If you are unfamiliar with the [adoption triad](#), the term is commonly used to include the three

parties involved in every adoption: the child, the adoptive parent(s), and the birth mother. Because adoption includes all three members of the triad, it's necessary and important to consider the value that all three bring to the table.

### 1. Children

*"There really are places in the heart you don't even know exist until you love a child."* -Anne Lamott

Yes, there are three sides to the adoption triad, but the child is easily the most important person involved. It's easy for the majority of people to see the needs of the child when considering the importance of adoption. Kids are dependent on adults for survival and have little to no say in the decisions being made in regards to their lives. It is our responsibility and obligation to do our very best to put our child's needs first when making decisions and plans for adoption.

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So how many kids are we talking about here anyway? There are literally [millions of children](#) in need of a safe and loving home! Personally, these numbers are staggering and are easily THE most important reason for adoption. It's tragic to think of children without homes and families, and although the processes can be intimidating, adoption offers a way to help!

UNICEF records that there are more than [15 million orphans](#) waiting to be adopted worldwide. Over 400,000 children are in foster care in the U.S. on any given day, and on average, they will spend 2 years in the foster care system.

That's a lot of kids! But what could adoption mean for them? Well, research shows that the lack of a stable, loving family can lead to [physical, mental, and developmental issues](#). Difficulty forming healthy attachments, struggles with social skills, and severe mental health problems are only a few of the possible outcomes for children without permanency. Every child needs a loving home, and every child **DESERVES** a loving home.

Clearly, adoption is very important to the children because it has the power to shape the entire rest of their lives. These kids are what piqued my interest, and stole my heart, all those years ago. They are the reason so many amazing people dedicate their lives to caring for orphans and children in foster care. They are also the reason we not only need adoption, but also we need it to be the best version of it possible.

## 2. Adoptive Parents

*"We look at adoption as a very sacred*

*exchange. It was not done lightly on either side. I would dedicate my life to this child."* -Jamie Lee Curtis

Adoptive parents are another important piece of the adoption triad. They are the adults assuming responsibility for a child's life and well-being. Making the commitment to accept a baby or child into your family and to love and care for him or her for a lifetime is not a decision that comes lightly! Regardless of the circumstances that lead a parent to adoption, the end result is an absolute honor and a gift.

There are many reasons people choose to start a family—or grow their family—through adoption. Some have a desire for children without having a spouse; others may have infertility or physical pregnancy concerns, and many same-sex couples choose adoption as a path to parenthood as well. Others simply have a desire, or spiritual calling, to grow their family by welcoming a baby or child who needs a home.

Whatever the motivation, hopeful adoptive parents must overcome many obstacles to complete adoption requirements. From extensive paperwork to uncomfortable personal interviews and background checks to large financial commitments, adopting is not for the faint of heart. Thankfully, there are many resources, [support groups](#), and education available for these parents or anyone considering the option.

Adoption is an important and often life-changing option for parents who choose this route. I

know as a hopeful adoptive mother, I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to add to my family after experiencing secondary infertility! As I mentioned before, I've felt a draw toward adoption for a long time, and now, I'm preparing for the possibility that my entire life might grow and expand. The depth of the pain, mixed with the joy and beauty of adoption, has been completely life-changing already.

## 3. Birth Mothers

*"Love is unselfishly choosing for another's highest good."* -C.S. Lewis

Birth mothers are the third piece of this story and another very important reason for adoption. Approximately [50% of U.S. pregnancies are unintended](#). While some women have the means and desire to parent, many feel alone and completely lack the resources they want or need to raise a child. Many others will decide that they simply can't provide the life they desire for their child for any number of reasons.

Whatever the deciding factors, birth mothers are women who are willing to make the brave, difficult, and often heartbreaking choice to give birth to their child and then place their baby with another family. Sadly, for many women, this decision can result in shame or embarrassment, but there is an increasing number of [birth mothers sharing their stories](#) and experiences in an effort to remove the stigma that may have once existed. There are more resources than ever for birth mothers to find acceptance and community and to own their voice in the triad!

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[Open adoptions](#) are increasingly possible, and encouraged, for the sake of all three members of the triad. Some level of communication between birth moms and adoptive families can be good for healing and strengthening bonds between all parties. When done well, open adoption can be a beautiful celebration of the birth mom, adoptive parents, and the child.

### 5. Communities

*“Open adoption is an opportunity to build enormous bridges to families beyond your reach.” -Kristen Gerald*

You’ve likely heard it said that it takes a village to raise a child. Adoption can be the best proof of that concept when done well. It takes work and a commitment to learning and growing. When adoptive parents and birth parents are willing to work together and support each other, the results can be a beautiful extended family that provides love, support, and safety for the child.

The beauty of this complicated process is that it always allows for extended community support as well. All growing families need extra support. It’s a time of adjustment that shakes up the “rhythms” at the core of everyone involved. The birth mom is healing as she grieves the disconnect from her baby, both physically and emotionally. Her time of grief and recovery is a perfect time for community members to step in and surround her with love and support. Organizations like [Lifetime Healing Foundation](#) offer education, support, and community for birth moms as well as adoption educators, adoptive families, and community members!

New adoptive parents are navi-

gating unfamiliar territory too. If they’re not parents already, they may find themselves diving into a brand-new world of diapers and sleep schedules, formula versus donated breast milk, pediatrician visits, baby toys, and carriers. The list goes on and on, and on top of these typical challenges, adoptive parents are often also considering birth trauma, birth mom relationships, and in some cases, are raising a child of a different race. This can be completely overwhelming! There are many [resources](#) available such as support groups and education, but a family’s community can also play a huge role in helping with this transition. Everything from meal prep to cleaning to holding the baby while the new parents nap can be so helpful at this time! This is a great, practical list for helping communities who want to be there but aren’t sure how: [“10 Ways to Support a New Adoptive Family.”](#)

Of course, the child has to be mentioned in this section too. The child is the most important piece of this puzzle! The reason both families are willing to sacrifice and make hard decisions is out of love for this beautiful child. Finding (or creating) the right community for raising this child is so important. Parents can ask themselves if their community is educated to the importance of adoption. Do they know the correct, most respectful language to use when referencing adoption? Are they mindful of the way they are including your child? Above all, does your community have your child’s best interest at heart? It really does take a village, so let’s all be the best village for each other!

*“Families don’t have to match. You don’t have to look like someone else to love them.” -Leigh Anne Tuohy*

Families absolutely don’t have to match. They don’t have to follow anyone else’s definitions or requirements either. Choosing adoption means choosing a different family model. It’s important to be educated about the risks and concerns, but above all, remember how much love can come from becoming a family in this way. Adoption is a gift that has the power to transform entire communities into better, more loving and mindful people.

*Are you considering placing a child for adoption? Not sure what to do next? First, know that you are not alone. Visit [Adoption.org](#) or call [1-800-ADOPT-98](#) to speak to one of our Options Counselors to get compassionate, nonjudgmental support. We are here to assist you in any way we can.*

*Also contact NACS [Foster Care Program](#), (716) 874-4460*

**About Ashley Greeno:** Ashley is a self-taught baker and creative entrepreneur who recently sold 10,000 cookies in 18 months to help cover her family’s adoption expenses. She’s still baking, but is also passionate about teaching other hopeful adoptive families how to think outside the box when it comes to funding their adoptions too. Check out her free guide: [Creative Strategies for Funding Adoption](#).





## The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)

The purpose of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) is "...to protect the best interest of Indian Children and to promote the stability and security of Indian tribes and families by the establishment of minimum Federal standards for the removal of Indian children and placement of such children in homes which will reflect the unique values of Indian culture..." (25 U.S. C. 1902). ICWA provides guidance to States regarding the handling of child abuse and neglect and adoption cases involving Native children and sets minimum standards for the handling of these cases.

(From [U.S. Dept. of the Interior-Indian Affairs](#))

### Understanding The Indian Child Welfare Act

From [The Indian Child Welfare Act Law Center](#)

From 1958 to 1967 the **Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)** contracted with the Bureau of Indian Affairs through the Indian Adoption Project for purposes of placing Native American children with white families. This effort to assimilate the children into mainstream culture through the destruction of their families resulted in several generations of Indian children losing their identities. In a keynote speech on April 24, 2001, Shay Bilchik, the Director of the CWLA, apologized for the CWLA's role in these adoptions stating, "No matter how well intentioned and how squarely in the mainstream this was at the time, it was wrong; it was hurtful; and it reflected a kind of bias that surfaces feelings of shame, as we look back with the 20/20 vision of hindsight."

From the 1950s through the 1970s, child protection practices were

prevalent that resulted in the needless removal of Indian children from their homes, often based solely on poverty because they neither understood nor respected the central role of tribes and extended families in protecting the best interests of Indian children.

Historically there have been a multitude of practices resulting in Indian children being removed from their reservations and homes, resulting in the deprivation of their connection to their family and tribes. While the methods have varied the results have been consistent, in adolescence, these children experienced alarming rates of chemical dependency, suicide, and mental illness. They, their families, and their tribes have never fully recovered from the broken relationships, broken ties to culture, and lost years.

Congress enacted the **Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)** in 1978 in response to the unwarranted removal of Indian children from their families and tribal communities in alarming numbers. In Minnesota from 1971-1972, 13% of all Indian Children (25% of Indian Children under age 1) were in adoptive homes and 90% of placements were in non-Native homes. These practices destroyed the child's connection to their families and tribal community, resulting in irreparable harm to the child and devastating communities. Congress stated in 1978 that "the wholesale separation of Indian children from their families is perhaps the most tragic and destructive aspect of American Indian life today." H.R. REP. 95-

13896, at 9 (1978). Upon understanding the magnitude of the problem, the U.S. Congress passed the Indian Child Welfare Act.

### Highlights of the Act include:

- Recognition of Tribal Sovereignty – reflected in jurisdictional mandates including the presumption that tribal courts are in the best position to make decisions regarding the interests of Indian children
- Preservation of Indian families – reflected in the provision of active efforts required to keep Indian families together, including providing at-risk families with social supports
- Tribal and family connectedness – reflected in the placement preferences, Indian children must be placed within their extended families or tribes if at all possible when are removed from their homes

Despite the protections of the ICWA, a disproportionate number of Indian children continued to be removed from their homes and placed in non-Indian homes. In 1993, American Indian leaders created the Indian Child Welfare Law Center to address this devastation. **The ICWA Law Center** is a non-profit, American Indian legal services organization committed to providing the highest quality of legal representation to Indian families throughout Minnesota involved in legal proceedings governed by the Indian Child Welfare Act and tribal code.

### Resources

1. [United States Code Title 25 – Indian Chapter 21 – Indian Child Welfare](#) – PDF

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2. [Summary of ICWA Related Juvenile Protection Rules](#) – PDF
3. [BIA Guidelines for State Courts; Indian Child Custody Proceedings](#) – PDF
4. [MINNESOTA STATUTES 2013 260C](#) – PDF
5. [Minnesota Chapter 260.751 MN Indian Family Preservation Act](#) – PDF
6. [MN Case Law 1991 to Present](#) – PDF
- 6a. [Supreme Court Mississippi](#)

- [Band of Choctaw Indians v Holyfield 1989](#) – PDF
- 6b. [Supreme Court case 570 South Carolina](#) – PDF
7. [2007 Amendments to Tribal State Agreement changes](#) – PDF
- 7a. [2007 Tribal State Agreement](#) – PDF
8. [Bulletin Minnesota Department of Human Services 04-68-10](#) – PDF
9. [Minnesota Social Services Manual](#) – PDF

10. [ICWA – Active Efforts Best Practices \(MN DHS\)](#) – PDF
11. [Resources for professionals](#) – PDF

*Note: Some documents are in .pdf (Portable Document Format) file format and require a PDF reader or browser plug-in. A FREE copy of [Acrobat Reader](#) is available.*

*For additional in-depth information, visit:*

<https://icwa.narf.org/about-icwa>

## Navajo Code Talker John Kinsel, Sr. Walks On at 107

By [Native News Online Staff](#) October 19, 2024

The Navajo Nation is mourning the loss Navajo Code Talker John Kinsel, Sr., who passed away in his sleep on Saturday. Mr. Kinsel was 107.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren expressed heartfelt condolences to the family of the late Navajo Code Talker and ordered all flags on the Navajo Nation to be flown at half-staff from sunrise on Sunday, October 20, until sunset on Sunday, October 27.

“On behalf of the entire Navajo Nation, our Navajo veterans and service men and women, First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren and me, we extend our sincerest condolences and prayers to the family of Mr. Kinsel,” President Nygren said. “Mr. Kinsel was a Marine who bravely and selflessly fought for all of us in the most terrifying circumstances with the greatest responsibility as a Navajo Code Talker. He fought alongside his brothers in arms, for the U.S. Marine Corps, for the United States and to protect the Navajo Nation in a time of war.”

In the 1940s, Mr. Kinsel was among the young Navajos who enlisted in the Marine Corps during wartime, leaving the safety of their homeland to defend the country, fully aware of the risks involved. Kinsel served as a Navajo Code Talker in World War II in the 9th Marine Regiment and the 3rd Marine Division during the Battle of Iwo Jima. He was among the brave Navajo men who used the Diné language to develop an unbreakable code during World War II, contributing to the United States’ victory.

“On behalf of the 25th Navajo Nation Council, we are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of John Kinsel Sr., one of the last remaining Navajo Code Talkers. Beyond his legacy of a warrior, he was also a proud Navajo man who upheld the values of his heritage while serving his country with distinction. As we honor his life, we extend our deepest sympathies to his family, loved ones, and the entire Navajo Nation. May his spirit rest in peace, and may his memory continue to

inspire generations to come,” said Speaker Crystalyne Curley.

“It is appropriate for us to acknowledge, recognize and honor this distinguished man’s life, bravery and steadfast dedication to his family, community of Lukachukai and to the entire Navajo Nation as a model Navajo citizen and warrior,” President Nygren said.

Mr. Kinsel’s son Ronald Kinsel shared the news of his father’s passing with President Nygren.

“Cheii passed early this morning in his sleep,” he said. “The howling wind brought his parents and relatives that came for him early dawn today. He used to keep asking if it snowed yet. He was waiting for the first snow to take his spiritual journey. Moisture lifted his footprints this morning. He lived a very long, full and accomplished life. What he and the other Code Talkers accomplished changed the course of history, and will always be remembered, and I will continue to tell his legend and greatness.”

*(Continued on page 11)*

*(Continued from page 10)*

Navajo Nation Veterans Administration Executive Director Bobbie Ann Baldwin acknowledged Mr. Kinsel's courage and dedication to his Navajo culture.

"We honor the life of our brave Navajo Code Talker John Kinsel, Sr.," Director Baldwin said. "His heroism, courage and love for our Diné way life is beyond measure. We salute you Corporal Kinsel. Semper Fi."

Veterans Administration Interim Deputy Director Olin Kieyoomia, who worked to ensure Mr. Kinsel received his long-awaited home renovations and knew him well, said the Navajo Nation has lost someone precious.

"The Navajo Nation has lost a treasure, a hero, a man who shaped

history by saving countless lives with our Navajo language and instilled pride within the Navajo Nation and the world," Deputy Director Kieyoomia said. "He is an example of the title United States Marine. He will be forever missed and remembered. Condolences to the family of the late Honorable John Kinsel, Sr."

He, like hundreds of others, left the safety and peace of their Navajo homeland to defend the country not knowing where they would go but knowing they may not return.

"He used our Navajo language to protect us and keep us alive through a war, and to this day in his most senior years," President Nygren said. "He lived an honorable and happy life for 107 years. I'm glad we were able to improve the home he built himself

that he didn't want to leave, and that he was able to enjoy for a few months. But I'm sad it couldn't have been for longer. He earned it and he deserved it."

Last August, Mr. Kinsel and his family celebrated the completion of renovations to his home by the Navajo Nation Veterans Administration.

Born in Cove, Arizona, in 1917, Mr. Kinsel was Kin'ichíí'nii and born for Tábaqahá, with Naakaii Dine'é as his maternal grandfather and Bit'ahnii as his paternal grandfather. He resided in Lukachukai, Arizona.

Funeral arrangements are forthcoming.

[Native News Online](#)

## Who Were The Navajo Code Talkers?

### How Native American Code Talkers Pioneered a New Type of Military Intelligence

By: [Jesse Greenspan](#), [History.com](#)

Updated: March 5, 2024 | Original: May 29, 2014

Native American soldiers have made important contributions during all U.S. wars. But during the two world wars, Indigenous languages became the basis of a secret communications strategy that stumped enemy intelligence—and proved essential to winning key battles.

It began in 1918, when three enlistees from the Choctaw nation deployed to France were overheard by an officer speaking their native language. It sparked an epiphany: That language, so unknown outside their own small nation—and without a long written history—

could be perfect for secret coded communications. Choctaw soldiers were quickly utilized as "phone talkers," delivering messages via field telephones, during World War I. And while the conflict ended soon after, their work shaped military communications going forward. During World War II, the strategy encompassed more than a dozen Native languages, most notably Navajo. That work became known as "code talking."

Ironically, the U.S. military was drawing benefit from languages that the U.S. government had long been working to eradicate. As part of a broader campaign of forced assimilation, Native American children had for decades been pushed into boarding schools that forbade—and punished—them for speaking their

home languages. Now, on the field of battle, those same languages were saving lives.

### Serving a Nation That Had Tried to Eliminate Them

One of the so-called "Five Civilized Tribes" of the southeastern United States, the Choctaw traditionally farmed corn, beans and pumpkins while also hunting, fishing and gathering wild edibles. Despite allying themselves with the United States in the [War of 1812](#), they were pressured afterward into ceding millions of acres of land to the government.

Following the passage of the Indian Removal Act in 1830, most members of the nation were then [forced to relocate](#) to present-day Oklahoma in a series of journeys

*(Continued on page 12)*

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that left an estimated 2,500 dead. In what would become a catchphrase for all Indian removal west of the Mississippi River, a Choctaw chief described it as a “trail of tears and death.”

When the United States entered [World War I](#) in April 1917, it had not yet granted citizenship to all Native Americans, and [government-run boarding schools](#) were still largely attempting to stamp out their languages and cultures. Nonetheless, several thousand Native Americans enlisted in the armed forces to fight the Central Powers. Nearly 1,000 of them representing some 26 tribes joined the 36th Division alone, which consisted of men from Texas and Oklahoma.

“They saw that they were needed to protect home and country,” said Judy Allen, senior executive officer of tribal relations for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, “so they went to the nearest facility where they could sign up and were shipped out.”

### Phone Talkers' Contributions in World War I

In the summer of 1918, the 36th Division arrived in France to participate in the upcoming [Meuse-Argonne campaign](#), a major offensive along the Western Front. At that point, the outcome of the conflict was still in doubt.

“World War I really wasn’t decided until very, very late,” explained William C. Meadows, a Native American studies professor at Missouri State University and expert on code talking. “It wasn’t like World War II, where we clearly had them on the run.”

One main problem for the Allies

was the Germans’ ability to listen in on their communications and to break their codes, which were generally based on either European languages or mathematical progressions. “We couldn’t keep anything secret,” Allen said.

An apocryphal story spread around that a German once interrupted a U.S. Signal Corps member sending a message to taunt his use of code words. Sending out human runners proved equally ineffective since about one in four were captured or killed. And other methods of communication, such as color-coded rockets, electronic buzzers and carrier pigeons, were too limiting, too slow, too unreliable or a combination thereof.

Soon after the Meuse-Argonne campaign got underway, a company commander in the 36th Division reportedly happened to overhear three of his soldiers—Solomon Lewis, James Edwards and Ben Carterby, who had attended the same Native boarding school together—conversing in Choctaw. In a flash, he recognized the military potential of the language, essentially unknown to the Germans, and persuaded his superiors to post a Choctaw speaker at various field company headquarters.

On October 26, 1918, the Choctaws were put to use for the first time as part of the withdrawal of two companies from the front. Having completed this mission without mishap, they then played a major role the following two days in an attack on a strongly fortified German position called Forest Ferme.

“The enemy’s complete surprise

is evidence that he could not decipher the messages,” Colonel A.W. Bloor later wrote in an official report. The tide of battle turned within 24 hours, according to Bloor, and within 72 hours the Allies were on full attack.

At least 19 Choctaws subsequently completed a short training session. Lacking the words for certain modern-day military terms, they used “big gun” for artillery, “little gun shoot fast” for machine gun, “stone” for grenade and “scalps” for casualties, among other substitutions, thereby becoming true code talkers rather than simply communications operators speaking a little-known language.

“They create these code words, but they don’t actually get to use them because the war ends on the 11th [of November],” Meadows said. Even so, Colonel Bloor described the results of the training session as “very gratifying.” “It is believed, had the regiment gone back into the line, fine results would have been obtained,” he declared. “We were confident the possibilities of the telephone had been obtained without its hazards.”

A captured German later admitted that his side couldn’t make heads or tails of the Choctaw speakers, whom Allen credited with likely bringing about an earlier end to the war and saving hundreds of thousands of lives. The irony would not have been lost on them, she added, that “the same government that was asking them to use their native language to win the war was punishing people for speaking it back home.”

American Indians from at least five other nations also used their na-

*(Continued on page 13)*



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tive tongues to transmit messages during World War I in an effort to confuse the Germans, although unlike the Choctaws they are not known to have invented intentionally coded vocabulary.

### **Native 'Code Talkers' in WWII**

Indigenous coders made an even bigger impact during World War II when the U.S. government specifically recruited Comanche, Hopi, Meskwaki, Chippewa-Oneida and Navajo tribal members for such work. The Navajo developed the most complex code, with over 600 terms, for use in the Pacific Theater, compared with about 250 terms for the World War II-era Comanche and under 20 terms for the World War I-era Choctaw. Their work was crucial for victories at D-Day and Iwo Jima, among other important battles.

One of their codes translated Navajo terms into English letters that

were then used to spell out words. For example, according to the National World War II Museum, the Navajo word for "ant," "wo-la-chee," was used to represent the letter "a" in English. Another code contained word-to-word translations, but some had to be improvised. Since the Navajo had no word for "submarine," the code talkers agreed to use "besh-lo," which translates to "iron fish."

"Even the other tribe members back home didn't know what this coded vocabulary meant," Meadows said. "It was all gibberish to them." In addition to the handful of intentionally coded Native American languages employed by the Allies, they used two dozen or so others on a more ad hoc basis. The opposition is not believed to have deciphered a single code talker message in either world war.

Only the Navajo, with more code talkers than all other Indigenous nations combined, have become relatively well known, in part due to the Hollywood film "Windtalkers." They received congressional recognition for their exploits in 2000, whereas the remaining tribes had to wait eight more years until a bill passed praising them for their "dedication and valor."

"Honoring Native American code talkers is long overdue," the bill admitted. Pursuant to the legislation, a medal ceremony took place in November 2013 in Washington, D.C., with 33 tribes known to have had code-talking members in attendance. "My regret," said Allen, "is that none of the code talkers were alive from our [Choctaw] nation to see this moment, and none of their children were alive."

Resource:  
[History.com](https://www.history.com)

## The President of the United States Issues Historic Apology for U.S. Indian Boarding School Atrocities

*By Shaun Griswold, October 25, 2024*

**GILA RIVER INDIAN RESERVATION** -- *A moment of silence, and then an apology.*

President Joe Biden marked history at the Gila River Indian Community where he apologized before community members and tribal leaders from nations across the country in an effort to move forward from the horrendous era of the U.S. Indian boarding school policies.

"Native communities flourished on this land, they practiced democratic government before we ever heard of it, developed advanced agriculture, contributed to science, art and culture," Biden said to a

round of cheers.

This marked the first visit by a U.S. president to a tribal nation since Barack Obama went to Standing Rock in 2014.

"Tens of thousands of Native children entered the system, nearly 1000 documented Native child deaths, though the real number is likely to be much, much higher," Biden said. "Lost generations, culture and language, lost trust. It's horribly, horribly wrong, it's a sin on our soul."

At this point he asked the crowd from a podium set up on a foot-

ball field at the Gila Crossing Community School, where Native kids from kindergarten to 8th grade now learn their traditional languages and songs, for a moment of silence to honor the people harmed by the federal boarding school system.

Then, Biden made a remark that has never been said by a U.S. President.

"The federal government has never, never formally apologized for what happened, until today, I formally apologize," he said. "It's long, long, long overdue. Quite

*(Continued on page 14)*

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frankly, there's no excuse this apology took 50 years to make. The federal Indian Boarding School policy and pain it has caused will always be a significant mark of shame, a blot on American history."

Cheers followed. So did tears from many in the crowd that were emotional even before Biden's remarks.

Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, whose department commissioned a truth and reconciliation report that investigated this history and outlined a course of action, spoke before the President, tearing up at one point before delivering a powerful line that (heightened) enthusiasm in the crowd.

"The federal government took deliberate and strategic actions through boarding school policies to isolate children from their families and steal from them the languages, cultures and traditions that are foundational to Native people," she said. "But as we stand here together, my friends and relatives, we know that the federal government failed."

Haaland said that the research from the Interior into the boarding school era will continue to develop with historical markers that include potential monuments and oral history projects. She said traditional language revitalization programs will grow out of this research, signaling that a project led by language experts and teachers will be rolled out soon.

"For much of this country, boarding schools are places where affluent families send their children for an exclusive education. For indigenous peoples, they served as places

of trauma and terror," Haaland told the crowd. "For decades this terrible chapter was hidden from our history books, but now our administration's work will ensure that no one will ever forget."

Native people from Gila and beyond that were in the crowd said that the apology is a good step to moving forward, and that what is ever next should also include much more support for cultural practices that remain and, seemingly, are growing.

At the event, dozens of children from Gila River, Ak-Chin and Tohono O'odham sang traditional songs and prayers before Biden's appearance.

Joshua Francisco watched his aunts, sisters and nieces perform before the president's visit. He tapped his cane to the rhythm from the rattles from the singers they danced too. In four years he wants to see the United States keep the promises it's making on how to heal from the boarding school atrocities, and continue to boost access to water and energy independence.

"Just let us thrive. A lot of governments keep us Native Americans down like that, but we're still here. We don't give up like that," he said. "We're showing it right now that we're still here with our tradition. They haven't killed our tradition yet, and hopefully you don't."

David Vandruff is from Gila River where he works to support health programs from community members. He helps with a healthy foods garden program at

the Gila school where Biden apologized. Vandruff said the garden is planting root vegetables like broccoli, radishes and onions.

"When students learn about the history of our people and how we used to garden and farm along the river, it helps them understand their place in the world," Vandruff said.

He said the harm that is caused by poor diets and a lack of access to healthy foods can be addressed in schools and should be part of any programs target to fix harms caused to Native people in educational settings.

"Kids are growing up in the non-Indigenous world. And so, there is a time and place in a young person's life where they have what I refer to as an identity crisis, and so something like gardening and farming can help them bridge that gap or come back to their roots."

That history of Native people, or what was done to Native Americans at boarding schools that shifted their trajectory in a horrendous way was front and center for Virginia Flores.

Flores is Diné and went to a boarding school in Arizona. Her experience was consistent with the terrible accounts seen in the report from the Interior department.

"I spent eight years of my life at the Shonto Boarding School. It was rough, the abuse, the sexual abuse. The things we were exposed to, it was rough," she said.

Flores works in child welfare with Native American kids. It's what

*(Continued on page 15)*

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she's done in life to heal. For her she wants to see the traditional language revitalization investment grow. It's something she started with her kids that are now adults. Practicing language together is an act of care and one that is an act of stopping generational trauma.

Native Americans traumatized at boarding schools took that back home and passed down those harms to their family. Flores said her parents left the school without any idea on how to show care or even discipline without violence.

"Just that affection you give to a kid, it was really hard," she said.

So she found that affection working on learning basic Diné with her daughter, who is now studying it more in college. "She always says, 'Mom, you know what? You should have taught me how to speak my own language. Now I have to pay to go to the university to learn my own language.'"

"I think our younger kids need to do their Native languages and

things like that in school," she said, "Even at home, you know, it's like just teaching."

*About The Author: Shaun Griswold*

Shaun Griswold, contributing writer, is a Native American journalist based in Albuquerque. He is a citizen of the Pueblo of Laguna, and his ancestry also includes Jemez and Zuni on the maternal side of his family. He has more than a decade of print and broadcast news experience.

[Native News Online](#), 10/25/24

## Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Promotion Program

### Awareness in November 2024



**Men's Health Awareness** - men grow their mustaches to raise awareness about men's health issues like suicide or prostate cancer. The awareness month hopes to educate about the importance of early cancer detection as prostate cancer doesn't typically have any warning signs or early-stage symptoms.

Please check with your primary doctor for a prostate check up!



**Diabetes Awareness Month:** A month to raise awareness about diabetes, which can damage the heart, kidneys, eyes, and nerves. Have annual checkups with primary care Physician and get linked to the right health services for your diabetes needs.

## Welcome New Project Secretary, MacKenzie Rusinek

I was born and raised all over Buffalo, but grew up primarily in the Kenmore / Tonawanda area. My partner and I now live in North Tonawanda where we have been for 2 years in January.

We have 2 cats, Banjo - a tuxedo, and Milo - a Siamese lynx point, who has thumbs! When I'm not working, I'm a digital and fiber artist, a photographer, gardener, and / or rewatching Bob's Burgers.

That's me! Thank you for your time, and I hope today treats you kindly.



# November Clubhouse Corner



*"I believe I have inside of me, everything that I need to live a bountiful life."*

-Ms. Celie



**Over the past few weeks here at the Clubhouse we've been having a great time celebrating the fall and Halloween season! The Clubhouse took trips to the Niagara Pumpkin Farm and Iron Island Museum! Some of the clubhouse youth helped scare as part of NACS Annual Halloween party too!**

**Stay Tuned to hear about all the fun events we have in store for the Fall!**

To join us for our next outing event, please contact:  
NACS Clubhouse Manager (EC), El Tyner:  
716-449-6472 or the  
Youth Clubhouse hotline (NC) 716-449-6405

*Happy Autumn!*

*Have a Very Demure School Year!*

**STAY UPDATED ON OUR CLUBHOUSE EVENTS WITH SOCIAL MEDIA!**





# NACS Annual Halloween Party October 21, 2024

*Submitted by Star Wheeler, Health & Wellness Director*

NACS' Halloween Party was on October 21! We had a haunted tent, face painting, temporary tattoos, a Halloween photo backdrop, pumpkin decorating and Halloween crafts, snacks and games! We had almost 100 people in attendance! **A frightfully good time was had by all!**

Here are a few pictures of the event:



*NACS Halloween Staff Pictured Here:  
Kneeling l-r: Star Wheeler, Brittnie Zurbrick,  
Laura Gugliuzza*

*Standing, l-r: Colleen Casali, Justine Rose,  
Abigail Crosby, Melissa Zielinski, Casey Bednarski,  
Sandra Roberts, Simone Alston*

# Native American Heritage Month Celebration

Date:

Friday, November 15, 2024

Location:

Niagara Falls High School Gymnasium



FUNDED BY: THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES-  
ADMINISTRATION FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

## Native American Heritage Month: Some Good Reads

Here are some books to consider reading in celebration of the month:

1. [An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States](#), Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, 2014
2. [Red Nation Rising: From Bordertown Violence to Native Liberation](#), Nick Estes, et.al, 2021
3. [Lines from a Mined Mind: The Words of John Trudell](#), John Trudell, 2008
4. [Seven Fallen Feathers: Racism, Death, and Hard Truths in a Northern City](#), Tanya Talaga, 2017
5. [Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants](#), Robin Wall Kimmerer, 2015
6. [Five Little Indians: A Novel](#), Michelle Good, 2020
7. [Native Voices: Indigenous American Poetry, Craft, and Conversations](#), C. Marie Fuhrman (Editor), 2019
8. [Never Whistle at Night: An Indigenous Dark Fiction Anthology](#), Shane Hawk (Editor), 2023



## Employment Opportunity



www.nacswny.org

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

MICHAEL N. MARTIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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

### Equal Opportunity Employer

**Position:** Workforce Development Specialist

**Type:** Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt

**Salary/Range:** \$17.00-\$19.50 / hour

**Office:** 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14207 – 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 as needed. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).*

### ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 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 in 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.

### EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree in human services or related field of study preferred, with three (3) years' experience in workforce development including supervision and program management.
- Work experience may replace some of the education requirements at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Knowledge of local area service providers.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, and communication skills.
- Intermediate computer skills and understanding of office applications including MS Office Suite.
- Familiarity with and sensitivity toward local Native American communities.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements including a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

### BENEFITS:

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

For consideration send resume to: [humanresources@nacswny.org](mailto:humanresources@nacswny.org)

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 960 James St. Syracuse, NY 13203 • Phone: 315-322-8754 • Fax: TBD

### Equal Opportunity Employer

**Position:** Family Preservation & Strengthening Caseworker- Erie County

**Type:** Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt

**Salary/Range:** \$18.23-\$19.23 / hour

**Office:** 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14207

### SUMMARY:

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

### ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

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

### EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree in human services or related field of study required with experience in child welfare.
- Knowledge of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), Federal and State regulations, as well as mandated reporting requirements.
- Intermediate computer skills and understanding of office applications including MS Office Suite.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, and communication skills.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements.
- Familiarity with and sensitivity toward local Native American communities.
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 960 James St. Syracuse, NY 13203 • Phone: 315-322-8754 • Fax: TBD

### Equal Opportunity Employer

**Position:** Erie County Clubhouse Youth Leader- 3 openings

**Type:** Part-time/ hourly/ non-exempt

**Salary/Range:** \$16.00-\$17.00 / hour

**Office:** 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14207

### SUMMARY:

*The Clubhouse Youth Leaders assist the Clubhouse Manager in providing a safe, supportive, culturally appropriate, alcohol and drug free environment for all members. The Clubhouses welcome self-identified Native American youth and young adults ages 12-17 years old. Leaders will provide transportation, supervision, and leadership. Recruitment through outreach, attending and participating in weekly staff meetings will also be required. Leaders must be available for non-traditional hours (evenings and weekends). The Clubhouses are open 25 hours per week. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).*

### ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Supervise, provide leadership, and be a positive role model for youth.
- Deliver workshops and activities in a confident and organized manner.
- Ensure youth programming utilizes a percentage of evidence-based prevention models.
- Provides safe transportation and/or supervision of youth to and from clubhouse activities.
- Recruit youth through local outreach efforts.
- Adhere to data collection and performance measurement requirements determined by SAMHSA and OASAS.
- Maintains necessary documentation and ensures the timely completion of all necessary recordkeeping.
- Ensure Clubhouse maintenance, cleanliness, and safety is maintained.
- Other duties as assigned.

### EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's or associate degree in human services or related field of study preferred.
- Experience working with community and group settings. Work experience may replace some of the education requirements at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Knowledge and understanding of substance use, and experience with at-risk youth.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, and communication skills.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements.
- Familiarity with and sensitivity toward local Native American communities.
- Must have a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

### BENEFITS:

- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Employee Assistance Program
- Holiday Pay (if scheduled)

For consideration send resume to: [humanresources@nacswny.org](mailto:humanresources@nacswny.org)

## Employment Opportunity

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

MICHAEL N. MARTIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



www.nacswny.org

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

### Equal Opportunity Employer

**Position:** Niagara County Clubhouse Youth Leader- 2 openings

**Type:** Part-time/ hourly/ non-exempt

**Salary/Range:** \$16.00-\$17.00 / hour

**Office:** 1522 Main Street, Niagara Falls, NY 14305

### SUMMARY:

*The Clubhouse Youth Leaders assist the Clubhouse Manager in providing a safe, supportive, culturally appropriate, alcohol and drug free environment for all members. The Clubhouses welcome self-identified Native American youth and young adults ages 12-17 years old. Leaders will provide transportation, supervision, and leadership. Recruitment through outreach, attending and participating in weekly staff meetings will also be required. Leaders must be available for non-traditional hours (evenings and weekends). The Clubhouses are open 25 hours per week. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).*

### ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Supervise, provide leadership, and be a positive role model for youth.
- Deliver workshops and activities in a confident and organized manner.
- Ensure youth programming utilizes a percentage of evidence-based prevention models.
- Provide safe transportation and/or supervision of youth to and from clubhouse activities.
- Recruit youth through local outreach efforts.
- Adhere to data collection and performance measurement requirements determined by SAMHSA and OASAS.
- Maintains necessary documentation and ensures the timely completion of all necessary recordkeeping.
- Ensure Clubhouse maintenance, cleanliness, and safety is maintained.
- Other duties as assigned.

### EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's or associate degree in human services or related field of study preferred.
- Experience working with community and group settings. Work experience may replace some of the education requirements at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Knowledge and understanding of substance use, and experience working with at-risk youth.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, and communication skills.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements.
- Familiarity with and sensitivity toward local Native American communities.
- Must have a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

### BENEFITS:

- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Employee Assistance Program
- Holiday Pay (if scheduled)

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 960 James St. Syracuse, NY 13203 • Phone: 315-322-8754 • Fax: TBD

### Equal Opportunity Employer

**Position:** Niagara County Youth Clubhouse Site Manager

**Type:** Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt

**Salary/Range:** \$19.00-\$20.00 / hour

**Office:** 1522 Main St, Niagara Falls, NY 14305

### SUMMARY:

*Under the guidance of the Health & Wellness Director, the Youth Clubhouse Manager is responsible for assisting and leading in the performance of day-to-day duties in delivering and providing a safe, supportive, culturally appropriate, alcohol and drug free environment for all Native American youth and young adults ages 12-17 years old. This position will lead in the oversight of activities, cultural programming, and supervise youth leaders. Incumbent must be available for non-traditional hours (evenings and weekends). The Clubhouses are open 25 hours per week. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).*

### ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Implement, plan, and lead program activities, field trips, and workshops in accordance with contractual obligations both virtually and in-person.
- Have knowledge and understanding of substance use and ensure youth programming utilizes a percentage of research and evidence-based and best practices prevention models.
- Serve as a facilitator and member of the Youth Advisory Council.
- Coordinates scheduling of the Clubhouse Youth Leaders.
- Organize, supervise, and provide safe transportation for youth clubhouse members.
- Ensure Clubhouse maintenance, cleanliness, and safety is maintained.
- Recruit participants for the clubhouse program through outreach events and materials.
- Maintain necessary documentation and ensures the timely completion of all necessary recordkeeping, including the utilization of database systems.
- Ensures the program remains compliant with all contractual obligations and requirements.

### EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree from accredited institution with supervisory experience or relevant role.
- Experience working with at-risk youth, community and group settings. Work experience may replace some of the education requirements at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Knowledge and understanding of substance use.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, and communication skills.
- Computer skills: ability to use Microsoft Office Suite.
- Familiarity with and sensitivity toward local Native American communities.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements including a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

### BENEFITS:

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

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## Employment Opportunity



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 960 James St. Syracuse, NY 13203 • Phone: 315-322-8754 • Fax: TBD

### Equal Opportunity Employer

**Position:** Clubhouse Youth Advocate

**Type:** Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt

**Salary/Range:** \$19.00-\$20.00

**Office:** 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14207 and 1522 Main St, Niagara Falls, NY 14305

### SUMMARY:

*Incumbent will assist the Healthy & Wellness Director and the Youth Clubhouse Managers in providing a safe, supportive, culturally appropriate, alcohol and drug free environment for all members. The Youth Advocate will ensure to serve any Native American youth ages 12-17 years old in Erie & Niagara Counties, who are in recovery from or at-risk of developing a substance use disorder. Incumbent will be responsible for ensuring youth receive resources, needs, services, supports, and/or activities to ensure overall good health. Incumbent must be available for non-traditional hours (evenings and weekends). The Clubhouses are open 25 hours per week. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).*

### ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Recruit youth participants through outreach efforts at community events, local schools, etc.
- Meet with youth one-on-one and in group settings and develop individualized advocacy plans with youth.
- Establish and expand a network of referral resources and linkages to provide relevant, appropriate services and/or supports as identified by the youth.
- Have knowledge and understanding of substance use and ensure youth programming utilizes a percentage of research and evidence-based, and best practices prevention models.
- Assist both Erie & Niagara County Clubhouses by implementing programming through delivery of workshops, recreational, and cultural activities in accordance with contractual obligations both virtually and in person.
- Continually keep informed of new developments relevant to the provision of services to youth.
- Ensure Clubhouse maintenance, cleanliness, and safety is maintained.
- Recruit participants for the clubhouse program through outreach events and materials.
- Maintain necessary documentation and ensures the timely completion of all necessary recordkeeping, including the utilization of database systems.
- Ensures the program remains compliant with all contractual obligations and requirements.

### EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree from accredited institution with supervisory experience or relevant role.
- Experience working with at-risk youth, community and group settings. Work experience may replace some of the education requirements at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Knowledge and understanding of substance use.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, and communication skills.
- Computer skills: ability to use Microsoft Office Suite.
- Familiarity with and sensitivity toward local Native American communities.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements including a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

### BENEFITS:

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

For consideration send resume to: [humanresources@nacswny.org](mailto:humanresources@nacswny.org)

# Thanks for reading!

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

You can also look for our newsletter on our [website](#).

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

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

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STREET ADDRESS CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE

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1005 GRANT STREET, BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14207