



**ASSOCIATION ON AMERICAN INDIAN AFFAIRS**  
**Accountable to Our Past, Committed to Our Future**  
**2021 Annual Report**

**#EVERYTHINGBACK**



**#SACREDITEMSBACK**

**#SOVEREIGNTYBACK**

**#ANCESTORSBACK**

**#CEREMONYBACK**

**#LANGUAGEBACK**

**#CHILDRENBACK**

**#CULTUREBACK**

**#LANDBACK**



# ASSOCIATION ON AMERICAN INDIAN AFFAIRS

Protecting Sovereignty ◦ Preserving Culture  
Educating Youth ◦ Building Capacity  
SINCE 1922

## ACCOUNTABLE TO OUR PAST, COMMITTED TO OUR FUTURE

The Association on American Indian Affairs is the oldest non-profit serving Indian Country, working to change the destructive path of federal policy from assimilation, termination and allotment, to sovereignty, self-determination and self-sufficiency. Throughout its 99-year history, the Association has positively impacted Indian Country through its efforts to support Tribal governance reforms, protect the integrity of Native family structures, protect Sacred Places, promote language revitalization efforts, assist in the return of stolen cultural heritage, and provide meaningful opportunities for Native youth to achieve greatness and stay close to culture.

The Association began 2021 with vigor and excitement - working diligently to prepare the organization for its next 100 years of advocacy. The Association launched its #EverythingBack movement, which is an intentional movement towards reconciliation, reparation, return - healing and making whole - of everything that was stolen, taken, and looted without free, prior, and informed consent. #EverythingBack is a call to action to Indian Country, our allies, and supporters to stand united and demand that the very things that make us who we are as human beings and autonomous sovereign Nations, are returned.

We must amplify our voices and come together to begin healing collectively from the past and committing to a future of advocacy and action. When we stand together, and make our voices heard together, then we heal together. Only then can we truly create a world where diverse Native American cultures and values are lived, protected, and respected.

We cannot envision our next 100 years without YOU! We need your commitment, we need your time, we need your advocacy, and we need your investment to build a new path forward for the next 100 years. Your support will fund programs that protect sovereignty, preserve culture, educate youth and build capacity on the ground.

As we look to our 100th year anniversary in 2022, we ask you to continue your commitment to Indian Country and help us commemorate 100 years of advocacy, action, and fighting for a better future for Native Nations. We cannot stop the fight now. Now is the time we must stand together and demand #EverythingBack today, tomorrow, and for all the generations to come. Thank you for your commitment to Indian Country.

Sincerely,



Frank Ettawageshik, Odawa  
President of the Board of Directors



## A YEAR IN SUMMARY

### Programs that Are Accountable to Our Past and Committed to the Future

In 2021, the Association on American Indian Affairs developed 3 main programmatic priorities arising from our strategic development efforts. These priorities were adopted in 2021 and will guide our programming. These programmatic priorities are *The Next Generations*, *Cultural Sovereignty* and *Becoming an Ally*.

#### THE NEXT GENERATIONS

The Association has a long-standing commitment to serve Native children and families through various programs and projects. The approach to the Next Generations is very simple: the decisions we make now will impact the next seven generations to come and beyond. We may never meet those generations, but we must make good, sound decisions on their behalf and develop programs that will protect their human rights to health, safety and culture.

**The Indian Child Welfare Act.** In the 1960-70s, the Association developed the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 through evidence-based research as well as legal advocacy in state courts to bring children home that had been removed from their families improperly. ICWA was created to direct and guide certain decision-making activities that occur during Indian child custody proceedings in a state court to protect the relationship between the child and their family and maintain the child's rights to his or her cultural connections.

Even though ICWA is considered the gold-standard in child welfare policy, there has been a growing effort bankrolled by the Goldwater Institute - a nonprofit think tank against government interference - which has launched a coordinated attack against ICWA alongside anti-Indian-sovereignty groups, the private adoption industry, and organizations like the Cato Institute. This opposition led to the *Brackeen v. Zinke* case in the Texas federal district court in which the states of Texas, Louisiana, and Indiana challenged ICWA as an unconstitutional race-based statute. In October 2018, the Texas judge found - for the first time in 40 years, and the first time ever in a federal Indian law case - that Congress did not have the power to pass ICWA, finding ICWA was a race-based statute, among other things.

The case was appealed to the Fifth Circuit, and after its confusing findings, a petition for certiorari was filed with the U.S. Supreme Court. On October 12, 2021, the Association along with 180 Native Nations and 35 Native organizations, 25 states and the District of Columbia, the Casey Family Programs and 10 other child welfare and adoption organizations filed amicus briefs asking the U.S. Supreme Court to take the United States and Native Nation intervenors' petitions for review. The Court will likely decide whether it will accept the petition in early 2022.

The Association continues its advocacy supporting ICWA in several ways, including in coordination with the National Indian Child Welfare Association, the National Congress of American Indians, and the Native American Rights Fund in the #ProtectICWA campaign. The campaign provides communications and public education to make sure everyone understands that ICWA is the gold standard in child welfare, protects against centuries of harm to Native children, their families and Native Nations, and is still very much needed today.

**Adoption Investigation Project.** The Adoption Investigation Project is a long-term investigation into how the private adoption industry and state law work to incentivize the

removal of Native children from their families and Nations, in violation of ICWA. The state legal research portion of this project has been completed in 2021 and we are developing sources to continue the investigation.

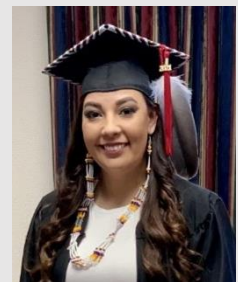
**Native Youth Justice.** The Association continues to work and partner with Native youth justice organizational partners and Tribes to guide our youth justice efforts. First, we have renamed our “juvenile justice” work to “Native Youth Justice.” We believe the term “juvenile” is a label that can harm how a young person sees themselves as well as how others may view them, and the Association will no longer use the term “juvenile” in its programs.

In 2020-2021 the Association provided its expertise and support to the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the W. Haywood Burns Institute to work with the Pueblo of Isleta and other Native Nations regarding alternatives to detention for Native youth in Indian Country. The Association further explored the legal and financial restrictions regarding federal funds earmarked for youth justice detention facilities in Indian Country.

This project also allowed for the development of a new report and survey instrument that may analyze Indian Country youth justice programs and how Native Nations are providing alternatives to incarceration for youth. This work took place with various partners including the National Congress of American Indians, the National American Indian Court Judges Association, the National Indian Child Welfare Association, and other invited social service experts and organizations. The Association continues to work with our partners to best determine how to use these reports to improve capacity for Indian Country justice systems.

The Association launched a new Native youth justice project this year that will increase engagement with state and local jurisdictions through webinars, videos, and blogs. This work will inform those sites about how important it is to properly identify Native youth, and how working with Native Nations can provide culturally appropriate programming. The Association is also developing a Community of Practice to bring together Indian Country youth justice practitioners to network and strategize best practices. The Community of Practice will explore elements of Indian Country programming that keep youth out of detention and that can be seen as models to be duplicated or further developed for Indian Country justice systems.

**Undergraduate and Graduate Scholarships.** The Association’s Scholarship program began in 1947 and is the oldest scholarship program for Native students. Since 2015, the Association has awarded over 284 scholarships to at least 108 Native undergraduate and graduate students. Funding for the scholarship program comes from an endowment created by several estate gifts, which provides about \$24,000 per year. The remaining funds for scholarships come from individual donors and general operating funds.



This legacy program grants \$1,500 per year (\$750 for Fall and \$750 for Spring semesters) until the student graduates. To receive the scholarship, the student must be recognized by his or her Nation (the Nation does not have to be acknowledged by the federal government) and show a continuing commitment to their Nation or Indian Country as a whole. The student will continue to receive the scholarship until they graduate if they maintain a 2.5 grade point average and full-time status as a student.

The Association's 2021 scholarship recipients were:

- Ellie Adams - Lummi Tribe of the Lummi Reservation - Northwest Indian College - American Indian/Native American Studies
- William Allread - Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma - Stanford University - Juris Doctorate
- Jennifer Barnes - Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin - University of Wisconsin, Green Bay - Master of Social Work - Graduated Spring 2021
- DeShawna Begay - Navajo Nation - University of New Mexico - Bachelor of Science in Population Health
- Jordan Cheresposy - Pueblo of Laguna - Central New Mexico - Undergraduate Degree in Finance
- Kellen Claymore - Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe - Black Hills State University - Bachelor of Science in Psychology - Graduated Spring 2021
- Lake Crawford - Osage Nation - Yale University - Doctor of Medicine
- Heather DeMoines - Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan - Central Michigan University - Master of Science in Administration
- Shayla French - Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians - Michigan State University - Media/New Media Arts
- Samantha Gourd - Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians of North Dakota - University of Mary - Graduate Student in Educational Leadership
- Tavia Hart - Comanche Nation - Haskell Indian Nations University - Elementary Education
- Chance Hilburn - Cherokee Nation - Haskell Indian Nations University - Environmental Science
- Sydney Ice - Citizen Potawatomi Nation - Baker University, Kansas - Master of Arts in Elementary Education - Graduated Spring 2021
- Darian Jackson - Spirit Lake Tribe - University of North Dakota - Bachelor of Social Work - Graduated Spring 2021
- Patrick James - Navajo Nation - Northern Arizona University - Master of Arts in Elementary Education
- Alexander Joe - Navajo Nation - Fort Lewis College - Accounting
- Taylor Keplin - Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians of North Dakota - University of North Dakota - Medicine
- Lynn Martell - Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians of North Dakota - University of North Dakota - Graduate Degree in Psychology
- Arianna Miller - Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians - Haskell Indian Nations University - Business Administration
- Ashlee Olson - Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians - Minot State University - Master of Science in Special Education - Graduated Spring 2021
- Chambreigh Onesalt - Navajo Nation - University of New Mexico - American Indian/Native American Studies
- Melissa Prince - Tsimshian - University of Washington - Graduate Student in Nursing
- Desiree Quintana - Kewa Pueblo - Arizona State University - Undergraduate Degree in Human Nutrition
- Sareya Taylor - White Mountain Apache Tribe of the Fort Apache Reservation - Institute of American Indian Arts - Creative Writing
- Marsha Uutela - Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin - Saint Norbert College - Business Administration - Tribal Management
- Danielle Waters - Wyandotte Nation - Northwest Indian College - Social Service Substance Abuse

**Native Youth Summer Camp Grants.** The Association began providing grants to Native Youth Summer Camps in 1963 as a powerful way that the Association can work to accomplish its goals: to protect sovereignty, preserve culture, educate youth and build capacity. There is significant research that shows when young Native people are connected to their culture, they fare better mentally and emotionally than those who are not. Healthy and strong Native American youth will sustain strong Native cultures and protect Native Nation sovereignty for years to come.

The Association provides funding support for Native-led summer camps based on these 5-criteria:

1. The camp must provide programming to Native youth up to 18 years of age and be inclusive of LGBTQ2S+.
2. The camp must include education about health and wellness including diabetes prevention, nutrition, and physical fitness.
3. The camp must include education on culture, language and community advocacy.
4. The camp should involve Elders and have active community involvement.
5. The camp must follow safety and security protocols, including maintaining social distancing and mask wearing when needed, and provide education for hand washing, and how infectious diseases may spread.

Between 2003 and 2021 the Association has granted \$229,195 to 159 Native youth summer camps serving over 5,000 Native youth across Indian Country. In 2021, the Association was able to provide funding for 9 Summer Camps that reached at least 1,168 Native youth representing at least 22 different Native Nations:

- American Indian Child Resource Center, Oakland, California
- Dlóó' Yázhí Day Camp, Diné, Thoreau, New Mexico
- Eklutna Culture Camp, Native Village of Eklutna, Chugiak, Alaska
- Huslia Tribal Council, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Huslia Village, Huslia, Alaska
- Nis'to Incorporated, Sisseton, South Dakota
- Oglala Sioux Tribe Vice Presidents Office, Pine Ridge, South Dakota
- Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan
- North American Traditional Indian Values Enrichment Program, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Sitka, Alaska
- Young Warrior Society, Nespelam, Washington

Currently, the majority of our summer camp program is funded through a single donor: the Ben Plucknett Charitable Trust, and through other small individual donations. The Association sees a real need to develop a consistent national program throughout Indian Country that will address self-advocacy and build the Native youth voice and provide pathways to higher education and careers. To begin this work, the Association researched all known Native youth summer camps and developed a narrative report and interactive map to analyze the current efforts of Native youth summer camps—many of which were severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **CULTURAL SOVEREIGNTY**

Cultural sovereignty means simply: the things that empower us as Native Nations and Native Peoples related to our diverse cultures. The programs within Cultural Sovereignty include Repatriation and Protecting the Sacred.



**Repatriation.** The Association has been a national leader advocating for the repatriation of Native cultural heritage since its founding. The Association contributes to the development of legislation that supports repatriation and has provided advocacy for the creation and passage of the National Museum of the American Indian Act, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, PROTECT Patrimony Resolution, and the Safeguard Tribal Objects of Patrimony (STOP) Act. The Association assists Native Nations in domestic and international repatriation efforts and provides training and technical assistance upon request. The Repatriation Program at the Association is advised by the Repatriation Working Group and the Tribal Partners Working Group. The Association further provides technical assistance and training at its annual repatriation Conference.

**7<sup>th</sup> Annual Repatriation Conference.** The annual Conference is an intense hands-on working experience where individuals and entities from many different backgrounds can come together and find community in the important healing work of repatriation. The meaning of the word repatriation is broadening at every year's conference. Repatriation is not limited to the return of Ancestors, their burial belongings, sacred and cultural patrimony from institutions and federal agencies as provided under Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. Repatriation also includes the return of all elements of culture including intellectual property, archival information, languages and songs, and sacred sites and places, all of which were discussed at this year's Conference.



The Association hosted the 7th Annual Repatriation Conference virtually from November 1-19, 2021. The substantive days included November 3, 10, & 17th, with smaller events and talks throughout the month. The Conference was a huge success with almost 700 registered participants, in which we were able to provide 343 registration scholarships for Native Nation representatives and small museums' staff. Our 3-week Conference included 96 speakers, 27 panel discussion events, 20 virtual booths, 16 sponsors, 8 networking opportunities, and 3 keynote speakers. Conference was attended by Tribal leaders, Spiritual leaders, cultural heritage specialists, historic preservation officers, federal and state agencies including law enforcement, foreign and domestic museums and institutions, legal experts, academics, artists, dealers, collectors, youth, and the general public.

**International Repatriation.** The Association continues to support Native Nation efforts at repatriation from foreign institutions and building relationships with those foreign institutions to educate them on working with Native American Nations, concerns about international processes to effectuate the return of cultural heritage, and why repatriation is so necessary to the health of Indigenous communities.

The Association is currently performing independent investigations on international laws, as well as foreign institutions' collections. This is a long-term project and will further build Native Nation coalitions for increased success, visibility and education for the public and foreign countries. The Association is also partnering with the International Indian Treaty Council on their efforts to create international mechanisms for repatriation from museums who are from United Nations countries.

In 2021, the Association was gifted the website from Dr. Chip Colwell, founding Editor-in-Chief of SAPIENS, and Ernest House Jr., Senior Policy Director with the Keystone Policy Center, called "Restoring Ancestral Connections." The website is a resource for building relationships and connecting overseas museums and institutions and Native Nations. The Association is currently working with its international and Tribal partners to determine the best use of the website as a resource for bringing cultural heritage home.

**Illegal Trafficking in Native Cultural Heritage.** The Association has raised its voice loud against the sale and display of sensitive Native cultural heritage, including Ancestral remains and burial belongings, as well as objects used for ceremony or that are considered sacred and held collectively or communally by a Native Nation. As a tool to facilitate repatriation efforts of items held by private collectors, the Association issues alerts identifying items that may be potentially sensitive cultural items. The Association provides a breakdown of what Nation may be affiliated with items for sale as well as steps on how to proceed to have items removed from auction. The Association also maintains a database with information on past auctions and is in the process of expanding the scope of auction data collection and retention to expand the valuable data on file that can be utilized when needed to assist our partners and advocate for stronger laws.

The Association reported on 180 auctions or sales in 2021, which included at least 7,013 potentially sensitive cultural heritage items for sale. We did experience a 5% decrease in the number of auctions reported as compared to 2020. However, we experienced an enormous 527% increase on the number of potentially sensitive items reported in these auctions and sales from 1,117 in the year 2020 to 7,013 in 2021. This was likely due to more auction houses utilizing online platforms for their sales during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Association released an updated press release in April of 2021 urging individuals to invest in contemporary art created for sale by Native artists, instead of pursuing "antiquities" or "artifacts" that were taken without free, prior, and informed consent. The Association continues to bring Native Nations, auction houses and collectors together to obtain information about objects that are slated for sale. The Association can also assist with donations of cultural heritage items back to Native Nations.

**Repatriation Working Group.** The Association's voice on Repatriation efforts has been guided by its Repatriation Working Group - a working group of Native Nation practitioners, museums, lawyers and academics that work together to develop strategies that will support the return of vital cultural items. The Repatriation Working Group allows safe discussion about sensitive issues, as well as supports the development of strategy that will achieve success in matters involving NAGPRA, auction houses, collectors, museums and others who hold items that have been misappropriated due to a history of colonization and ignorance. The Repatriation Working Group has met monthly throughout 2021.

**Tribal Partners Working Group.** The Tribal Partners Working Group is a closed group limited to individuals who represent Native Nations on matters involving domestic and international repatriation, NAGPRA and other federal, state, and Tribal laws, cultural heritage protection, historic preservation, and Sacred Places efforts. The closed group allows repatriation practitioners to have a safe space to talk about matters that are not meant for the public, and



to build stronger coalitions throughout Indian Country. The Tribal Partners Working Group meets monthly.

**Policy and Legislation to Support Repatriation.** On July 8, 2021, the Department of the Interior invited Tribal leaders and Native Hawaiian Community leaders to consult on a draft proposal of a comprehensive revision of the NAGPRA regulations. The deadline for Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian leaders to submit written comments was September 30, 2021. The Association has a history of leading in NAGPRA matters and repatriation issues. The Association got to work immediately, hosting 3 working sessions that were open to our Tribal Partners to discuss the regulations, work through them together, and to answer questions. Based off the feedback and comments that were received from our Tribal Partners, the Association drafted comprehensive comments for Tribal Partners and sent the same to the Department of Interior on September 29, 2021.

On April 22, 2021, the Association sent a letter to multiple senators and representatives in support of the Safeguarding Tribal Objects of Patrimony (STOP) Act and urged Congress to not only pass the Act but to consider strengthening the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and the protection of Sacred Places. On June 21, 2021, the Association sent a second letter in support of the STOP Act, further explaining the Association's support and refuting recent criticisms of the Act. The STOP Act prevents the export of Native cultural heritage to stop illegal trafficking. When our sensitive items cross the borders, we lose our power to return them home. The STOP Act further requires the exporter to prove they have rightful ownership of the items they wish to export.

**NAGPRA Compliance.** The Association played a key role in the enactment of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in 1990 and has been very involved in the implementation of NAGPRA over the last 30+ years. The Association also researches, tracks, and records information on institution compliance with NAGPRA law. The Association maintains regular contact with our Native Nation Partners to understand the issues they have with institutions as they pursue repatriation of Ancestors and other cultural items.

As part of the Association's NAGPRA compliance efforts, on February 18, 2021, the Association sent a letter to Harvard University President Lawrence S. Bacow calling on Harvard and its Peabody Museum to comply with NAGPRA and require the free, prior and informed consent of Native Nations before research can be performed on those collections.

The Association also launched a call to action to seek support from the public to hold Harvard University and its Peabody Museum accountable for the mandates of NAGPRA and its other legal, ethical and moral responsibilities to obtain the free, prior and informed consent of Native Nations in all matters concerning their cultural heritage. We received 1,081 responses in support of holding Harvard University and its Peabody Museum accountable.

The Association was either quoted in or interviewed for at least 13 news articles and 1 podcast regarding our NAGPRA compliance efforts at Harvard. To build more awareness of our efforts with Harvard, the Association created a TikTok video explaining some of the key issues happening at Harvard University and its Peabody Museum. The video has over 25,400 views, over 12,600 likes, 280 comments, and 1,661 duets.

**Repatriation Training & Technical Assistance.** Along with the Annual Repatriation Conference, the Association provides technical assistance and training to Native Nation Historic Preservation Officers, cultural resource practitioners and museums, and responded to more than 200 telephone and email inquiries regarding Native cultural heritage items from Tribal and non-Tribal parties. This year, the Association provided NAGPRA training and technical assistance to Native Nations in Virginia covering topics from NAGPRA, historic preservation, and coalition building.

**Protect The Sacred.** In 2021, the Association expanded its Sacred Sites efforts to encompass more of the work the Association is involved in to protect the relationships we all depend on for a healthy ecosystem. The program has been retitled to “Protect the Sacred.” This was in large part because the Association recognizes that there are many Sacred Places, landscapes, animals, and other intangible sacred relationships with the earth, elements, and all living beings that need advocacy and protection.

On February 16, 2021, the Association joined an amicus (“friend of the court”) brief filed in the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in *Pueblo of Jemez v. United States* regarding unextinguished aboriginal Indian title to the Valles Caldera National Preserve. This may be the first unextinguished aboriginal Indian title claim seeking to actually recover land that has gone to trial ever in American history.

On June 25, 2021, the Association provided a letter of support for the Save Oak Flat Act H.R. 1884 which would permanently protect the Oak Flat area of Tonto National Forest from destructive mining proposals. Chair Raúl M. Grijalva (D-Ariz.) introduced the Save Oak Flat Act H.R. and Senator Bernie Sanders introduced its companion bill in the S.915 in the Senate. Oak Flat, or Chi’chil Bildagoteel, is of significant cultural importance and considered sacred by many Native Peoples and Nations in Arizona, including the San Carlos Apache Tribe. The San Carlos Apache Tribe has resisted efforts over many years by Resolution Copper, owned by international mining conglomerates BHP and Rio Tinto, to mine the region.

The House of Tears Carvers of the Lummi Nation transported a 25-foot totem pole from Washington State to Washington DC, on a two-week cross-country trek called, the Red Road to DC. The convoy stopped for ceremony and live-streamed events leading efforts to protect sacred places under threat from resource extraction and industrial development. The Association’s Board President and Program Director attended and participated in the ceremonies and events that took place in Mackinaw City, Michigan. The pole carries the spirit of the lands it visited and the power and prayers of people and places that were visited along the way. The Pole and all the prayers were delivered to the Biden-Harris Administration and Congress in Washington D.C. on July 29, 2021—ultimately culminating in an exhibition at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian.

Giving a voice to our relative who cannot speak in this physical world, the Association spoke up for the protection of the gray wolf. The Association provided letters and advocacy within the Biden Administration to show support for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s reversal of the previous administration’s decision to remove the gray wolf from the federal endangered species list. As part of our continuing efforts to protect the gray wolf, the Association also signed onto a Native Nations leader letter on September 14, 2021, urging Secretary Debra Haaland and the Department of Interior to immediately act upon the emergency petition filed

on May 26, 2021, to relist the gray wolf as an endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

In October 2021, the Association drafted an op-ed titled, *President Biden, We Plead for Our Brother the Wolf*, which urged the Biden Administration to make good on its promises to Indian Country by authorizing an emergency gray wolf relisting.

### **BECOMING AN ALLY**

The Association on American Indian Affairs has 99 years of providing meaningful public education on issues that affect Indian Country. The Association believes that a population that is better educated about Native Nations and the many complex issues that exist within Indian Country, will generate more engaged, supportive, and understanding allies. Becoming an Ally is all about relationship building with our membership, supporters, allies, and the people we serve. This programmatic priority includes all of our programs but is also part of our education efforts around the Association's 100 years of history, our Indian Affairs journal that has been published since the 1930s, our internship, fellowship and volunteer program, Murdered and Missing Indigenous Relatives, Red Hoop Talk video podcast, and the use of various social media tools and platforms to deliver public education about Native Nation issues.

**100-Year Celebration History Project.** Next year, the Association will be celebrating its 100-year anniversary of service to Indian Country! To commemorate this momentous milestone, the Association is developing its history for a book that will talk about the struggles and victories of changing federal Indian policy over the last century from assimilation and termination to self-determination and sovereignty.



The Association is very grateful to have the distinguished Matthew L.M. Fletcher (Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians) volunteering to author our history as a generous gift to the Association. Mr. Fletcher is a Professor of Law at Michigan State University College of Law and Director of the University's Indigenous Law and Policy Center. His list of contributions to Indian Country is endless, but to name a few, he sits as a Judge on many Tribal Courts, and has authored numerous legal and academic articles.

Many of the Association's century-worth of records and history are housed at the Princeton University Mudd Manuscript Library in Princeton, New Jersey, where Professor Fletcher will conduct research about the Association. He will also be conducting interviews with current and former board members and directors of the Association to learn first-hand of the organization's current past.

As the oldest non-profit serving Indian Country, the Association has a rich and inspiring history, and we are excited for the opportunity to share it with the world—and utilize this history to lay the groundwork for the next 100 years of service to Indian Country!

**99<sup>th</sup> Annual Membership Meeting.** The Association's Annual Membership Meeting is where members of the Association can take an active part in the governance of the organization by voting in new Board of Director members, adopt and revise bylaws and support other

governance activities of the organization. This year, the Association's 99<sup>th</sup> Membership meeting was held on December 4<sup>th</sup> and hosted by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and the Museum of the Cherokee Indian, in Cherokee, North Carolina. During the membership meeting, members re-elected three of our current directors whose terms ended at the end of 2021. Those three were Dee Ann DeRoin (Ioway), Bradford Keeler (Cherokee), and John Echohawk (Pawnee).

The Museum of the Cherokee Indian is located in the heart of the homelands of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Museum staff took participants on a journey through the museum showcasing the thriving Cherokee Culture of today. There was also a local community arts and crafts bazaar happening at the same time and our participants were able to get a firsthand look at a vendor table live right from the bazaar. Local community members shared about traditional foods, traditional games, and traditional arts and crafts.

**Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives.** The Association maintains a webpage to provide comprehensive information and resources about Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples. Much of this information is scattered; the Association developed this webpage to help centralize information for individuals in need, as well as the general public. The webpage includes proposed federal and state legislation, articles, involved agencies, and statistics about violence against Indigenous Peoples.

The Association also created a TikTok to bring awareness and education to the important issue of Murdered & Missing Indigenous Peoples. This TikTok video has over 23,900 views, over 10,800 likes, 295 comments, and 2363 duets. The Association continues to follow this work and advocate for our Murdered and Missing Indigenous Relatives. Our hearts ache with the family, friends, and communities who have lost a loved one.

**Social Media.** The Association continued to expand its social media footprint this year by posting daily articles, hosting webinars, sharing important information on Indian Country, and using our Native News Podcast called Red Hoop Talk to engage with our followers.

Each one of our social media platforms experienced a substantial increase in followers and subscribers in 2021. The Association increased followers on Facebook by 14.6%, Instagram by 13.2%, Twitter by 5.3%, LinkedIn by 68.5% and YouTube by 114.4%. Facebook outperformed the previous year's reach with a 270% increase and Instagram by 99.1%. Twitter witnessed an increase in impressions by 12.5%. YouTube was no exception, having increased video views by 35.4%

The Association has been encouraged with the use of TikTok by Native and non-Native youth to engage with issues important to the Association's vision. Though we only posted 12 videos this year, the following has grown to have over 4,532 and we expect more as we create more TikTok videos.

**Red Hoop Talk.** Red Hoop Talk is a live and streaming Native News and Talk Show about how Native and Indigenous Peoples stay #CloseToCulture. The Association invites special guests, panels and open talking circles to have live discussions about how Native people work to protect culture and strengthen self-determination and sovereignty for Indian Country. There are over 70 episodes of Red Hoop Talk available for viewing on our website and YouTube

channel. Subscribing to our YouTube channel will also increase our ability to earn income for our organization.

**Public Engagement.** The Association receives quite a bit of email correspondence and telephone calls. We respond to everything, even if it is to say we cannot help you, or to use the inquiry as an opportunity to provide education or other information. The general email address and phone number for the Association receives on average 62 interactions per month. We receive many inquiries from the public that deal with a wide range of subjects such as DNA testing and ancestry, questions about Native Nations and a wide variety of Indian Country issues, as well as requests for more information about scholarships, repatriation, sacred sites, and summer camps.

Additionally, this year we took note of a substantial number of press engagement and speaker requests. The Association actively engages with the press and the public to spread awareness on specific issues and provide public education. The Association's staff respond to multiple press inquiries and speaking requests per week. In 2021, the number of requests almost tripled from 1-5 requests to 10-14 requests per month. The Association has responded to at least 80 media inquiries in 2021 and had 53 earned media mentions this year, which includes direct quotes and citations from the Association as a source of information.

**#Everythingback Movement.** The Association is guided by the concept of #EverythingBack as an intentional movement towards reconciliation, reparation and return of everything that was stolen, taken, and looted without free, prior, and informed consent. #EverythingBack is about shared values for the environment, diversity, family and all of our communities. #EverythingBack is a call to action to Indian Country, our allies, and supporters to stand united and demand that the very things that make us who we are as human beings and autonomous sovereign Nations, are returned. This movement is for the healing of Native Nations and their citizens, as well as a healing for all of us as we take accountability in our roles to take care of the Earth, and one another. You can join the movement by standing with us and demanding #EVERYTHINGBACK!

## **FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

### **Accountable to Our Past, Committed to Our Future**

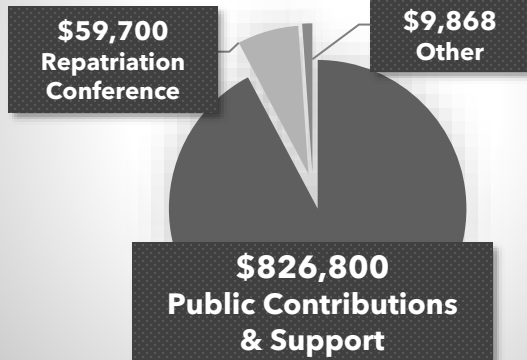
This year has been a year of growth and rebuilding. We are proud to report that the Association's income increased just over 85% from 2020. This year we are reporting income at \$896,368, compared to 2020's \$483,912 revenue reporting (not including the scholarship endowment). Public donor contributions were 92% of total revenue and the largest source of revenue for the Association. Thank YOU!!

Total operating expenses in 2021 were \$572,441. The percentage of program costs were just over 83% or \$476,753, showing efficient and above ideal spending. General and administrative costs were \$91,347 or 16% of total operating expenses; fundraising expenses were \$4,341 or less than 1% of total operating expenses. These exceed Better Business Bureau standards!

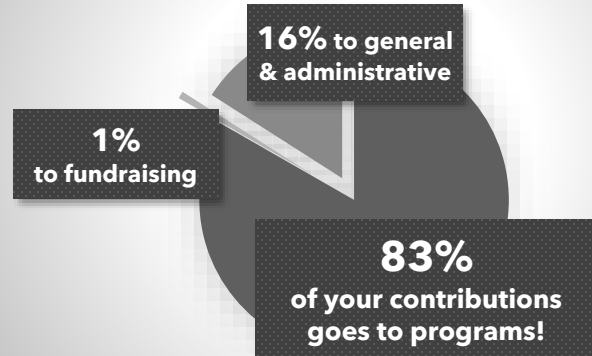
## Revenue Total

**\$896,3682**

(not including investment income)

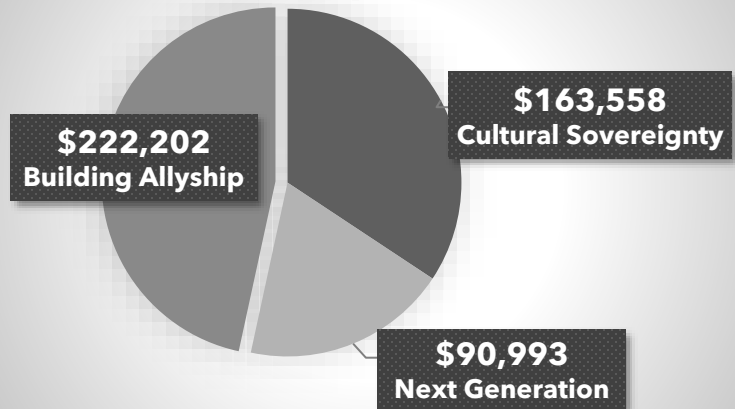


## Allocation of Total Expenses



From our total program expenses of \$476,753, funds dedicated to the Cultural Sovereignty Program were \$163,558; program costs for the Next Generation Program were \$90,993; and the Building Allyship program funding was \$222,202.

## Program Expense Details



Total net assets for 2021 were \$1,661,553, of which 62% of net assets were restricted. Restricted funds are those in which the donor restricts how the funds are used. Some of those restrictions include a limitation on the costs of staff to do the program work, so that must come from the unrestricted funds. Thus, restricted funding may not allow the organization to develop strategies to develop sustainable infrastructure and permanency.

## Total Net Assets

**\$1,661,553**

as of December 31, 2021





**DONOR & PARTNER COMMITMENTS FOR OUR FUTURE**  
**Accountable to Our Past, Committed to Our Future**  
**Thank You to Each of Our 2021 Donors!**

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What lifetime legacy would you like to leave to Indian Country? Please consider leaving a gift in your will or estate so that your commitment to the Association on American Indian Affairs and Indian Country may live on as a legacy of your voice and values. Estate gifts can reduce (and even eliminate) the amount of estate taxes your beneficiaries will owe. Let us share your life with Indian Country!

## **GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT**

### **Accountable to Our Past, Committed to Our Future**

The Association on American Indian Affairs is governed by an all-Native Board of Directors from all over Indian Country. The Board of Directors provides oversight and direction for the programs and operations of the organization. The Board assesses the organization's programs at least every two years and works to implement recommendations from the assessment to actively strengthen the health of the organization at every opportunity.

The Board meets at least four times per year, with at least two of those meetings face-to-face. However, because of the pandemic, we were unable to meet in person in 2021. All Board meetings were held through video conferencing and virtual platforms. The Board held four meetings: February 4, May 13 & 14, August 12 and December 9 & 10.





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# **Association on American Indian Affairs**

**Protecting Sovereignty • Preserving Culture**

**Educating Youth • Building Capacity**

**Since 1922**

## **VISION**

The vision of the Association is to create a world where diverse Native American cultures and values are lived, protected and respected.

## **MISSION**

The mission of the Association is to lead the grassroots fight to protect Native American Cultural Sovereignty.

## **GOALS**

The Association's goals are to protect sovereignty, preserve culture, educate youth and build capacity.

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