



ASSOCIATION ON AMERICAN INDIAN AFFAIRS

Protecting Sovereignty • Preserving Culture
Educating Youth • Building Capacity

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR PLAINS REGION IN-PERSON NAGPRA TRAINING

Native Country, Tuesday, March 17, 2026 - The Association on American Indian Affairs (the Association), in partnership with the University of Montana and Your Neighborhood Museum, will host a regional in-person NAGPRA Training for the Plains Region from May 12-14, 2026, at the University of Montana in Missoula, Montana.

As part of the Association's continuing efforts to protect sovereignty and preserve culture, this intensive technical and legal training is designed for Native Nation and institution practitioners actively engaged in repatriation work under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). The Plains Regional training is intended for Native Nations with homelands in Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Oklahoma, and Wyoming, as well as institutions with collections affiliated to the Plains and Plains Peoples.

The program for the Plains region will provide Native Nations and institutions with collaborative methodology and comprehensive instruction on NAGPRA, including legal requirements, compliance strategies, and hands-on guidance for the care and handling of Ancestors and cultural belongings. Sessions will include wellness training, mock scenarios, collaborative problem-solving exercises, talking circles, and focused workshops designed to equip participants with practical tools they can apply immediately within their Nations and institutions. The training will also host a special cultural event with dinner, creating space for connection, relationship-building, and shared learning among practitioners dedicated to advancing repatriation.

"The Association has spent several years developing this comprehensive curriculum to support NAGPRA Compliance in support of the return of our stolen culture, as the legislation requires," said Shannon O'Loughlin, a citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and the Association's CEO and Attorney. "By bringing together Native Nations and institutions in the Plains region, we can work together to provide tools for Native Nation advocacy and institution compliance, as well as support collaborative practices and relationship protocols that will ensure Ancestors and cultural heritage are returned with respect and accountability."

"We are delighted to host the NAGPRA training in May," said Adrea Lawrence, Ph.D., Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs for the University of Montana. "It reflects the steady effort our team has made to honor NAGPRA, work meaningfully with Native Nation cultural heritage practitioners, and help other institutions in Montana and beyond learn how to do the work well and in a respectful way."

Registration is open through Friday, May 1, 2026. Native Nation officials and representatives, as well as small museums with annual budgets under \$500,000 may register to participate free of charge. Regular registration is \$250. Vendor and exhibitor opportunities are also available. Organizations and partners interested in supporting this training can contact general@Indian-Affairs.org.

Visit Indian-Affairs.org/nagpratrainingsmontana for additional details and registration information.

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The Association on American Indian Affairs is the oldest national Native non-profit protecting sovereignty, preserving culture, educating youth, and building capacity. The Association was formed in 1922 to change the destructive path of federal policy from assimilation, termination and allotment, to sovereignty, self-determination, and self-sufficiency. Throughout its over 100-year history, the Association has provided national advocacy on watershed issues that support sovereignty.

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