



INDIAN TIMES NEWSLETTER

North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs



Above: Governor Roy Cooper presents the Order of the Long Leaf Pine to Commission of Indian Affairs' Director Greg Richardson at the 2023 American Indian Heritage Month event at the Executive Mansion.

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Stay connected to the latest Commission news and updates by reading the *Indian Times Newsletter*, visiting our [website](#) and following us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn (@NCDOA). We appreciate your support!

From the Executive Director

By: Greg Richardson

We're Moving

Effective March 1, 2024, the Commission of Indian Affairs will no longer be based in the Administration Building located on 116 West Jones Street in Raleigh. This building will be demolished to make way for a new state government facility. The Commission will relocate across the street to the Albemarle Building on 325 North Salisbury Street. Stay tuned for more details!

Budget Update

The NC General Assembly adopted a new state budget in September that includes funding to support the Commission's work during the next fiscal year, including funds for a new grant manager position.

The Commission also received \$200,000 from the Governor's Crime Commission to support work under the Violence Against Women Act. This increases our Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault program funding to a historic \$482,000.

A Look Back at Indigenous Peoples' Day 2023

Governor Roy Cooper proclaimed October 9 [Indigenous Peoples' Day](#) in North Carolina. Numerous events and activities were held throughout the state in American Indian communities and even in some private companies. For instance, tech firm CISCO hosted an event in the Research Triangle Park and donated \$10,000 to the Wake County Indian Education Program in support of its work. CISCO broadcasted the special event to its California headquarters.

Congrats to Commission of Indian Affairs' Steve Maynor

Congratulations to Steve Maynor, director of the Commission's Section 8 Housing, for earning the prestigious [Governor's Award for Excellence](#). Steve received the Governor's Award in the category of Efficiency and Innovation and was honored in a ceremony held at the Executive Residence in October.

American Indian Heritage Month Celebration Recap

Governor Cooper hosted a tribal leader reception at the Executive Mansion on November 1 where he signed the American Indian Heritage Month proclamation. During the event, I was honored with the Order of the Long Leaf Pine for 48 years of service to the state of North Carolina. The downtown Raleigh American Indian Heritage Celebration, and virtual Education Day, held November 17 and 18 respectively, were also successes, garnering a total of 26,000 attendees.



Conference Reports

National Congress of American Indians Annual Convention

By: Greg Richardson

I want to thank all the tribes and organizations for heeding the call for action to attend the Annual National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Convention and for working diligently to defeat the constitutional amendments.

The proposed amendments, as written, would exclude state-recognized Indian Tribes from holding membership in the NCAI and only allow federally-recognized tribes to hold membership in the organization. The proposed amendment was on the agenda of November 12-17 convention in New Orleans.

We also met with tribal and association leaders, briefed them on the proposed amendments and encouraged them to send delegates and individual members to the convention to oppose this action. The tribes and organizations responded accordingly and sent a large delegation to the convention. I am incredibly pleased to report that the proposed amendments were defeated by more than half of the 2,200 registered convention attendees.

Governor's Interstate Indian Council Annual Convention

The Governor's Interstate Indian Council (GIIC) Annual Convention was held November 11 in New Orleans in conjunction with the NCAI Convention. The event was attended by delegates from surrounding states that have Indian Commissions or Indian Affairs Offices.

The GIIC Convention provided an opportunity for state officials and other tribal leaders to discuss issues impacting state governments and Indian tribes. New officers were elected during the convention including CIA Deputy Director Candace Lowry, who was elected president of GIIC.

Program Updates

American Indian Adult Tobacco Survey Program

A new tobacco survey program, kicked off last July, is designed to gain a better understanding of commercial tobacco use among American Indians living in North Carolina. The North Carolina American Indian Adult Tobacco Survey is funded by a two-year grant from the NC Department of Health & Human Services (NCDHHS) with an annual budget of \$175,670. The survey also will help NCDHHS' Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch prepare a report on COVID-19 disparities funding programs.

To date, more than 1,500 people have participated in the survey with participants representing seven of the eight state-recognized tribes from various counties across North Carolina. The program, which had an initial goal of 2,000 participants, received additional funding from the V Foundation to increase its goal to 5,000 participants. The tobacco survey program currently has five part-time staff and a program director.



(Tobacco Survey Program continued)

Since its launch, the survey team has attended numerous outreach and cultural events throughout the state, actively promoting and administering the survey within American Indian communities.

In the near future, survey staff plan to expand their outreach efforts to businesses and health care facilities, as well as promote the program at the 2024 Unity Conference.

Pictured here: Tobacco Survey Program team at annual outreach events.



American Indian Workforce Development Program

North Carolina’s Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Program (WIOA) serves 63 counties with tribal communities known to be associated with the eight state-recognized and one federally-recognized tribe.

During FY 2023-2024, the state’s WIOA program provided a total of \$376,895 in funding to 90 program participants. Funds were used to assist American Indian students age 18 and older with employment, education, and training needs. Program participants who maintain a GPA of 2.0 or higher will receive an incentive payment of \$400 at the end of the semester.

Program participants are currently training in 18 different curricula at seven community colleges. Most will complete their educational training programs at the end of the semester in areas including but not limited to nursing, business administration, medical assisting, and nuclear medicine.

Economic Development Program—American Indian Business Survey

To better understand our business community, their needs and to promote their goods and services, the NCCIA’s Economic Development Program launched the American Indian Business Survey.

Business owners and enrolled members of an American Indian tribe living in North Carolina are encouraged to complete the survey by scanning the QR code. The survey only takes about 10 minutes to complete. Stay tuned for additional information on trainings, events and other activities including possible funding opportunities!





Supporting Undergraduate Native Students Program

The Supporting Undergraduate Native Students (SUNS) Program provides financial assistance to eligible American Indian undergraduate students for college tuition and related expenses.

Funded by the NCDHHS Office of Economic Opportunity through a Community Services Block Grant, the program was awarded a total of \$47,541 to provide services to 35 students for FY 2023-24. Already, 33 students are enrolled in the program with eight enrolled at a community college and 25 attending school in the state university system. Twelve of those students are expected to graduate in May 2024.

Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)

The Low- Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a federally funded program that helps eligible households by making a one-time payment to help homeowners pay their heating bills. Applications are accepted through local departments of Social Services each December 1 - January 31 or until funds are exhausted for priority households and February 1 - March 31 or until funds are exhausted for all other households.

Upcoming workshops include:

- Energy Conservation
- Energy Efficiency
- Energy Star Programs
- Weatherization Programs
- Community Resources

For workshop dates and locations, and other program information, see the [NC Commission of Indian Affairs website](#).

Pictured below: Members of the LIEAP getting the word out about program benefits at various community meetings and activities held throughout the year.





Section 8 Housing—What You Need to Know

By: Steve Maynor

Here's a roundup of recent events and upcoming initiatives in NCCIA's Section 8 Housing Program.

Special Purpose Vouchers

In a significant stride towards aiding those in need, the NCCIA issued 1,075 Emergency Housing Vouchers and 110 Mainstream Vouchers across North Carolina. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) also granted approval for NCCIA to administer five Stability Vouchers. For more information on the voucher programs, visit the [NCCIA's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program website](#).

Housing Event on February 29, 2024

Mark your calendars! NCCIA is hosting an event for landlords, tenants, and housing authorities on February 29, 2024. In collaboration with HUD and various housing partners across the state, NCCIA seeks to create an open platform for education, increase landlord participation, and foster partnerships within the housing community.

Outreach Events

Community engagement remains a top priority for the Section 8 Housing Program. Most recently the program participated in events such as the North Carolina Senior Citizen Coalition Conference, American Indian Heritage Celebration, as well as various tribal events across the state. These endeavors have increased capacity and facilitate the recruitment of landlords and the formation of new partnerships.

Funding

Recognizing the growing risk of homelessness and potential housing instability within the American Indian community, NCCIA is working diligently to increase program funds. The commitment is to decrease these risks and provide affordable, decent, safe, and sanitary housing for individuals and families.

NCCIA expresses profound appreciation to all housing partners for their unwavering support and collaboration. Together, we are making a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals and families within the community.

Community News

NC Indian Senior Citizens Coalition Conference

Approximately 150 people gathered November 3 at the Expo Center in Clinton for the 2023 North Carolina Indian Senior Citizen Coalition. Participants enjoyed a day of fellowship, and received educational resources that address the health, education, cultural, spiritual, and economic needs of the American Indian community.

The annual event also honors seniors, both past and present, recognizing their contributions to the American Indian community.

Pictured right—The NC Commission of Indian Affairs participated as a vendor and staff shared information on its available programs and services.





NC Mark Your Calendars for the 2024 NC Native American Youth Organization Conference

Each year, the North Carolina Native American Youth Organization (NCNAYO) hosts an annual summer conference on the campus of a state college or university. The annual gathering gives American Indian students an opportunity to learn more about their heritage, explore educational opportunities, and work together on issues and concerns of Indian youth as well as their communities.

This year, NCNAYO will commemorate 50 years of service to the American Indian community with an in-person conference at UNC-Pembroke June 20-23. Nearly 300 people gathered for the 2023 conference and NCNAYO hopes to exceed this number this year.

Visit the [conference website](#) for details. We hope to see you here!



NAYO Conference 2023

