

Tuscarora War

The Tuscarora War began in 1711 when Tuscaroras begin attacking colonial settlements near New Bern and Bath. For two years, the Tuscarora fought the many military expeditions sent against them, but in 1713 they suffered a major defeat, which broke their power forever. A large majority of surviving Tuscarora migrated to New York to rejoin the Iroquois League as its sixth and smallest nation. The few Tuscarora remaining were granted land on the Roanoke River in Bertie County only to leave their reservation because of raids by tribes from the south.

Indian Removal Bill

By the 1760s, white settlement had reached the mountain foothills of North Carolina, the home of the Cherokee. In 1838, under the authority of the Indian Removal Bill, nearly 17,000 Cherokee were forcibly removed from their ancestral home. An estimated 4,000 Cherokee people died during the 1,200-mile trek to present day Oklahoma. The event became known as the Trail of Tears. Nearly one-fourth of the Cherokee resisted removal, however, and it is from this nucleus that the Eastern Band of the Cherokee was formed.

Present-Day Tribes

By the mid-1800s, European settlements had spread across the Central Piedmont. Small tribes fled before the invasion and most joined kinsmen in eastern and southern North Carolina, southern Virginia or South Carolina. It is from these last surviving groups that the present-day, state-recognized tribes of North Carolina – the Coharie, Haliwa-Saponi, Lumbee, Meherrin, Occaneechi, Saponi and Waccamaw-Siouan – trace their ancestry.

Population

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, North Carolina's American Indian population totals 99,551, giving the state the largest American Indian population east of the Mississippi and the seventh largest in the nation. This group comprises 1.24 percent of North Carolina's total population. In addition, four urban Indian organizations are in the state and represent the American Indian populations of Charlotte, Greensboro, Fayetteville and Raleigh.

American Indians live in each of the state's 100 counties. Approximately 80 percent of the American Indian population reside in 11 counties – Columbus, Cumberland, Guilford, Halifax, Hoke, Jackson, Mecklenburg, Robeson, Scotland, Swain and Wake. Approximately 47 percent of the American Indian population in North Carolina lives in Robeson County, accounting for 38 percent of that county's total population.

Programs and Services

In 1971, the Commission of Indian Affairs received its first appropriation of \$12,500 from the North Carolina General Assembly. Since that time, state support has been expanded and federal funding of service programs has been secured. The Commission seeks opportunities for the successful advancement of American Indians by operating and encouraging the development of programs which provide employment and training opportunities, educational counseling, community economic development housing assistance, and health and human services.

Activities, services and programs sponsored by the Commission include:

Community Services Program

The Community Services Program provides in-home aide services and/or volunteer transportation for the elderly and disabled in Bladen, Columbus, Halifax, Warren, Cumberland, Sampson and Harnett counties.

Economic Development Program

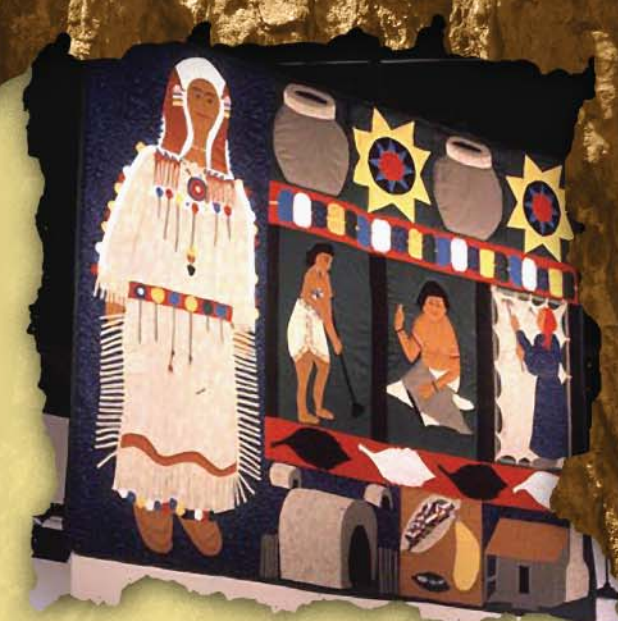
The Economic Development Program provides information and referral services to the state-recognized Indian tribes and organizations, American Indian citizens and organizations interested in economic development enterprises and business start-up or expansion.

Supporting our Native Students

Supporting Our Native Students provides financial assistance to eligible American Indian students.

Educational Talent Search Program

The Educational Talent Search Program provides one-on-one educational and career counseling to Indian youth and young adults ages 11 to 27 in the counties of Columbus, Halifax, Hoke, Sampson and Warren. Program guidelines require that two-thirds of the program's participants be first-generation college participants and come from families with low incomes.



American Indian Workforce Development Program

The Commission's employment and training program is funded under Title I, Section 166 of the Workforce Investment Act and provides job training and employment opportunities to unemployed, underemployed and low-income American Indians in North Carolina.

Housing Assistance Program

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development designated the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs as a public housing agency in 1976. The Purpose of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program is to provide safe, decent, sanitary housing for eligible families regardless of race, religion or political affiliation.

Photograph credits

Sauratown Woman - North Carolina Museum of History
Grandmother's Slippers - Senora Lynch (Haliwa-Saponi)
Headress - Eastern Woodland Gustoweh Tony Lynch (Haliwa-Saponi)
Hand Drum - Herbert Richardson/John Scott-Richardson (Haliwa-Saponi)
Tall Pineneedle Basket - Lorretta Oxendine (Lumbee)
Coharie Quilt - Coharie Quilters
Eva Wolfe basket - Courtesy of the North Carolina Arts Council
Deer photo - Exploring New Horizons





North Carolina Tribes and Organizations holding membership on the Commission are as follows:

- Coharie (Harnett and Sampson)
- Eastern Band of Cherokee (Graham, Jackson and Swain)
- Haliwa-Saponi (Halifax and Warren)
- Lumbee (Hoke, Robeson and Scotland)
- Meherrin (Hertford)
- Occaneechi Band of Saponi Nation (Alamance and Orange)
- Sappony (Person)
- Waccamaw-Siouan (Bladen and Columbus)

- Cumberland County Association of Indian Affairs (Fayetteville)
- Guilford Native American Association (Greensboro)
- Metrolina Native American Association (Charlotte)
- Triangle Native American Society (Raleigh)

North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs

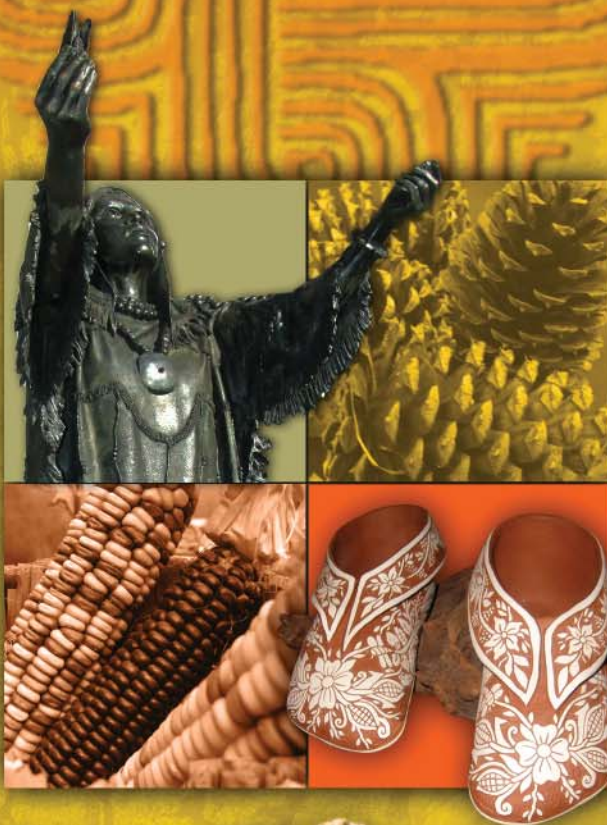
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The North Carolina
Department of Administration

Commission of Indian Affairs



About the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs

The North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs was created in 1971 by the North Carolina General Assembly in response to the requests of concerned Indian citizens from across the state. The Commission was established pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes 143B-404 through 143B-411.

The Commission's primary purposes are to assure the right of Indians to pursue their cultural, social and religious traditions and to increase economic and educational opportunities for Indians across the state.

Early Encounters

Indians of what is now the Virginia and North Carolina coast were hosts to the first English-speaking explorers and settlers. The first English settlement was established at Roanoke Island in 1585. Initial contact between these peoples was generally peaceful and friendly. In exchange for the newcomers' manufactured goods, the natives taught them fishing and agricultural techniques, introduced them to corn and tobacco cultivation, demonstrated methods of land clearing and showed them efficient use of the forest's bounty. The attempt to permanently settle at Roanoke Island failed with little evidence of what happened to the early colonists. The Roanoke settlement became known as the Lost Colony.



The Commission is one of five advocacy agencies within the North Carolina Department of Administration. North Carolina is one of approximately 27 other state governments that have state commissions or other similar Indian advocacy agencies established to advocate for Indian citizens.

Coastal Plains Indians

About this time, the coastal plains Indians of North Carolina numbered approximately 35,000, including about 30 tribes geographically separated by linguistic groups. Along the northeastern and central coast were the Algonquians. To the south resided those of Siouan lineage. And to the west lived the Iroquoian-related Tuscarora. For these tribes, early contact with white men often led to warfare and the introduction of smallpox and other deadly European diseases that decimated the Indian population. By 1710, the coastal Indian population had dwindled to no more than 5,000. Settlers began moving west and south, encroaching on native land and enslaving local people.

Historical Overview

Archaeological evidence indicates that Indians were living in the area now called North Carolina at least 10,000 years ago. For centuries before European contact, these native people lived in harmony with the natural environment, taking no more from the land than they needed to survive. Individual ownership of land was completely alien to them as they moved about making use of seasonally available resources. Tribes that lived in the area now called North Carolina included: the Chowanoke, Croatoan, Hatteras, Moratoc, Secotan, Weapemeoc, Machapunga, Pamlico, Coree, Neuse River, Tuscarora, Meherrin, Cherokee, Cape Fear, Catawba, Shakori, Sissipahaw, Sugeree, Waccamaw, Waxhaw, Woccon, Cheraw, Eno, Keyauwee, Occaneechi, Saponi and Tutelo.