

2015 Annual Report

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The Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs



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INTRODUCTION

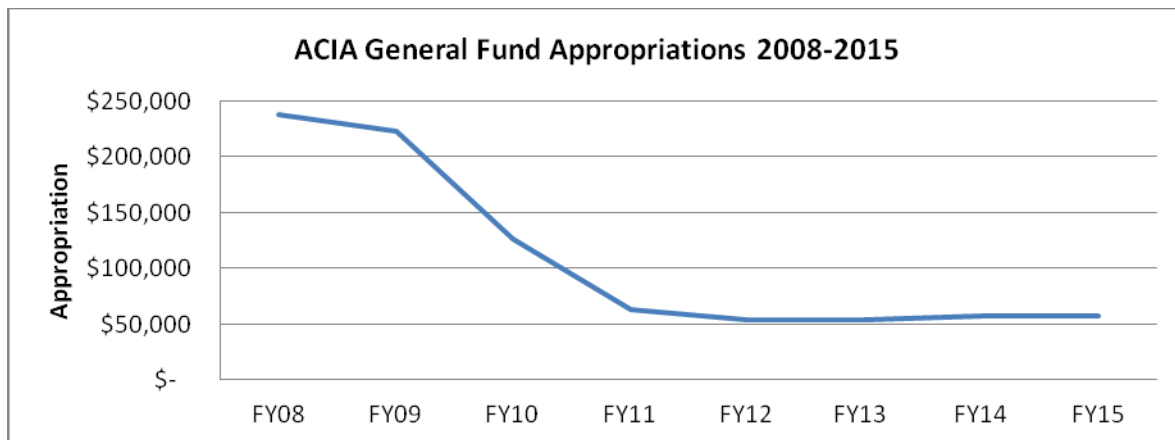
Pursuant to A.R.S. § 41-542, the Commission exists to assist and support state and federal agencies in assisting Indians and tribal councils in this state to develop mutual goals, to design projects for achieving goals and to implement their plans.

The public body of the Commission consists of 20 members, including seven Indian and four at-large members appointed by the Governor, and 9 ex-officio members who serve by the virtue of their office.

The 2015 Annual Report describes the varied initiatives carried out by the Commission staff and continued its involvement with Arizona Tribal Leaders, state agencies, professionals and the tribal communities.

MEETINGS OF THE PUBLIC BODY – FY15 SUMMARY

In accordance to A.R.S. § 41-541 (E), the Commission held four meetings of the public body with minutes of our proceedings posted on our website. The FY15 appropriation from the general fund was \$56,900 and is unchanged from FY14.



MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The membership is expected to experience a shift now that the Commission's focus has changed from economic development to public safety. We have a few members who do not intend to reapply to serve, as both Mr. Spurlin and Mr. Wheeler resigned effective January 2015. Mr. Francis Bradley is our new member who will be a compliment to future efforts as his expertise includes over 33 years serving in Indian Country Law Enforcement.

The election for officers has been delayed until new members have been appointed. In the interim, Mr. Pryor as Chairman and Mr. Rocha as Vice Chairman were requested to continue in their roles.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The focus for planning has been geared toward improving the quality of life through public safety. Our greatest challenge has been indentifying what types of activities we would be able to offer in order to influence change in tribal communities without impeding on tribal sovereignty. The following presentations were provided during meetings of the Commission to create awareness on the following issues:

- ❖ Human Trafficking
- ❖ Nationwide Safety Broadband Network (First Net)
- ❖ Colorado River Drought Response and Sustainability Planning
- ❖ Suicide Prevention

The Executive Director continued to serve as a member of the Homeland Security Senior Advisory Committee.

ANNUAL WORK PLAN

The Indian Town Hall will be focused around Public Safety and Law Enforcement. The idea is to have a consolidated group of approximately fifty people by invitation only. We would like to work towards a program which produces feasible options to answer some problem situations on tribal land. The challenge is to narrow the scope of public safety issues into a one-day format and develop feasible outcomes.

There is a connection between Indian Education and Juvenile Justice which is known as the school-to-prison pipeline. In this case, the Commission has an opportunity to involve native youth to address social issues which impact educational performance. Chief Bradley agreed and shared that a lack of support in human services and parental stability is reflected in the learning environment. His officers are often on the defense in dealing with drug use and behavioral issues within schools that struggle to maintain order. With this in mind the Commission, a collaborative partnership was established with National Relief Charities (NRC) to offer a project to tribal youth councils known as the Native Youth Know (NYK) project.

ASSEMBLE AND MAKE FACTS AVAILABLE

The Commission consistently shares pertinent information regarding employment opportunities, vacancies on state boards and commission, and other opportunities with the tribal community at-large. This year we were able to share more than 40 updates on Indian Affairs through the distribution of an electronic newsletter to provide assistance in identifying resources.

Serving as an information clearinghouse, the Commission annually processes more than 500 inquiries ranging in interest from duplicating the Arizona State-Tribal relations model to requesting presentations on cultural sensitivity.

- ❖ In February 2015, we had an opportunity to shape the minds of future world leaders. The American War College requested a very specific presentation for their cohort which included 52 senior International Air Force Officers (representing 46 countries). Historically, these students have gone on to become major policy makers in their respective governments. Many of these

international officers did not have an understanding of a contemporary American Indian beyond depictions in film and television. A presentation was customized for this group and concluded with an exceptionally long question and answer session.

In accordance with A.R.S. § 41-844(D), the director of the state museum is required to give notice to this office upon the discovery of American Indian human remains, funerary objects, sacred ceremonial objects or objects of cultural patrimony. Due to technical difficulties, the museum was not able to submit a report for FY15.

CONFER AND COORDINATE

In the previous year, the Commission finalized a multi-attribute valuation model and discovered that among all tribal nations and communities, the relevant key to an overall better quality of life is public safety. The next task was to identify what types of activities we would be able to offer in order to influence change in the communities without impeding on tribal sovereignty.

Resulting prioritization: Defining overall quality of life

Priority: All communities	Priority: Advanced communities
1. Public safety	• Leadership, education
2. Infrastructure, employment, health services	• Social and cultural resources
3. Leadership, education	• Financial services, Tribal ownership of businesses
4. Social and cultural resources	
5. Financial services, Tribal ownership of businesses	

Fortuitously, Partnerships for Native Americans (PWNA) was experiencing a similar challenge and approached the Commission to explore a partnership focused on native youth that would be known as Native Youth Know.

NATIVE YOUTH KNOW (NYK)

Public safety is a broad subject area in which some aspects are highly technical or simply beyond the jurisdiction of state law. Others areas overlap and involve the distribution of public services such as behavioral health, substance abuse, and suicide prevention. Unfortunately, there are an overwhelming number of social issues that are having an adverse impact on youth which leads to poor decision-making thus influencing the overall safety of a tribal community.

The NYK project has been established by Partnership With Native Americans (PWNA) in partnership with the Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs (ACIA) to engage the talent, intelligence and energy of Arizona's Native Youth. Through NYK, we sought to support creative youth-led projects that would have

a positive impact on the public safety of tribal communities. We supported projects that involved youth and community led solutions that served as counter measures to events and issues that could endanger or harm the community.

The following tribal youth groups received an NYK award for developing sustainable youth-led projects that addressed a public safety concern(s) in their community:

Hopi Jr/Sr High

Project: Hopi Residential Youth Development (Hopi Tribe)

The Hopi Jr/Sr High schools' student government will develop a park and recreation area to serve the youth and adults residing in the housing complex of the school. Enhancing this area will improve the development of health and wellness of children and adults, and serve as a place to gather for the boarder based community on the Hopi Reservation

Native American Music Fund

Project Name: Teens for Music (Ft. Defiance/Window Rock, Navajo Nation)

The Native American Music Fund – Teens for Music Council formed to promote music among the Native American youth and community in the Ft. Defiance and Window Rock areas of the Navajo Nation. The Teens for Music project hosted 4 music workshops on the reservations with local and known artist. The workshops were held at the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock and included performances by the artist. The group had raised approximately \$10,000 and purchased guitars and pianos prior to the music workshops. The instruments were then gifted to the youth on the Navajo Nation.

Little Singer Community School

Project: Promoting Cultural Well-being (Navajo Nation)

The Little Singer Community School 5th and 6th grade class proposed to revitalize and enhance an abandoned green house to support the schools effort to provide health, cultural and language development. The youth led project included environmental and cultural education provided by teachers and members of the Leupp Chapter, Navajo Nation.. The youth, teachers and members of the community renovated a greenhouse that has been rarely used and create a sustainable garden.

Lutu'uria Youth Group/Yonokame Group

Project Name: The Yoeme Maachiria Project (Guadalupe Community, Pascua Yaqui Tribe)

The Lutu'uria youth group is 6th grade to high school aged youth and the Yonokame group is college aged. These groups worked together and developed a culturally focused resiliency strategy as part of their youth and community development efforts. The younger aged youth utilized the college youth as mentors. These youth groups of Guadalupe, a Pascua Yaqui Tribe community, were jointly awarded cash and technical assistance resources support the implementation of "The Yoeme Maachiria" project. The project expanded the mentor relationship and supported the youth participants to learn from community elders committed to the project. Then the youth led community workshops on the Yaqui history, culture and language. The model is based on youth teaching youth the Yaqui History and culture to address issues rooted in historical trauma and loss of culture.

The Miss Pascua Yaqui Program

Project Name: The Huyapo Bwaa'ame Project (Pascua Yaqui Tribe)

The project I focused on teaching youth and the community about the ancestral diet and about edible plants and fruits harvested from the environment. A series of trainings were conducted by elders to the youth and community. To complement this work, a community garden was constructed to grow the plants and trees essential to the Yaqui Ancestral diet.

NYK FORUM

The specific objectives of the convening were to:

1. Provide a forum for youth to share their perspective about public safety
2. Provide an opportunity for youth to identify public safety concerns and prioritize those concerns;
3. Provide an opportunity for information exchange;
4. Identify opportunities for collaboration, and
5. Create a forum for networking.

Youth participants had three rounds of discussion using the world café method. Through the world café discussions, youth participants had the opportunity to discuss key questions in small groups. The first conversation focused on the concerns related to public safety. The second round of discussion encouraged youth to prioritize their concerns. The third conversation focused on solutions. Each group then reported a summary of their discussion.

The forum concluded with each youth participant making a written commitment to self improvement. The intent was to help youth understand that there are, in fact, big issues beyond control. However, making personal improvements has a positive impact on family, friends and the community. Each small step leads to broader impacts. Some of those commitments (as reported by students) included:

“Form a group to pick up trash monthly”

“Pray every morning in Dine traditional prayer daily”

“Less sugar intake by drinking less soda daily”

“Work harder in school, study and do homework daily”

“Not to be lazy daily”

“Prevent bullying, stand up for people. Be nicer and try not to be so shy”

NYK 2.0

During the reporting process, we learned that we lacked a sufficient cross section of the Arizona native youth population. Invitations to a follow up event were targeted toward unrepresented tribal youth and councils (ages 12-18), known as NYK 2.0.

In addition to continuing the world café process, NYK 2.0 emphasized leadership development through civic engagement and access to higher education. A tour was hosted by Yavapai College and the participants were welcomed by Dr. Penny Wills, Yavapai College President. A motivational speaker started the conversation that led into the NYK forum. Former Chairman LeRoy Shingoitewa shared his personal achievements that led him to Penn State and eventually to serve on the Hopi Tribal Council.

Later, we engaged in a discussion on “What Should My Legislator Know?” This activity includes a personal mention from each youth to call attention to issues impacting tribal communities. Senator Steve Pierce (Dist. 1) also shared his experience as a state legislator and how the legislative process impacts everyday people. Thoughts shared (as reported by students):

“I do not want any guns in my school or someone carrying one gun or more just for protection. The reason why is because we do not want anybody dead in school or in the streets”.

-Student from Zip Code 85344

“Y’all need to make shorter speeches or make them more appealing to the youth. Like stay on topic. Be brief & don’t stray from topic”.

-Student from Zip Code 86322

Our final activity included a video on how a bill becomes a law and interactive a mock legislative session. The youth participated as decision makers, and consider the adoption of a state candy bar. The youth were divided into groups to lobby on behalf of their candy bar. This method of education proved to be successful. The youth participants were left with a greater understanding of the basic mechanics of leadership responsibilities, processes and outcomes.

The first Native Youth Know Forum resulted in the youth identifying leadership development and education as important priority areas. The Native Youth Know 2.0 provided the partners with an opportunity to implement a leadership and education focused session.

WORK FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

In addition to these efforts, Governor Ducey and more than 30 state agencies strive to ensure that state services and resources are accessible to all eligible state citizens residing in Arizona Tribal Communities.

Pursuant to Executive Order 2006-14 *Consultation and Cooperation with Arizona Tribes* each executive branch agency is required to assign a Tribal Liaison as a point of contact for tribal issues. The Tribal Liaison assumes responsibility for the agency’s implementation of a tribal consultation policy with an annual report related to tribal outreach activities. The Commission provides a suggested template to emphasize the correlation between the agency tribal consultation policy, outreach activities and performance measure. These reports may be found at <http://azcia.gov/TCP.asp>

- ❖ For FY15, 20 reports were received from the following state agencies:
 - Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
 - Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System
 - Child Safety, Department of
 - Corrections, Department of
 - Economic Security, Dept of

Emergency and Military Affairs, Dept of
Environmental Quality, Dept of
First Things First
Game and Fish Department
Health Services, Dept of
Homeland Security, Dept of
Housing, Dept of
Liquor Licenses and Control, Dept of
Juvenile Corrections, Dept of
Public Safety, Dept of
Revenue, Dept of
Registrar of Contractors
Tourism, Office of
Transportation, Dept of
Water Resources, Dept of

This collaborative effort is facilitated by the Commission, who compiles the annual reports and distributes them to tribal leaders. In addition to this, regular meetings are held with tribal liaisons to share ideas, success stories, and brainstorm innovative strategies to serve the tribal community.

The Commission serves an integral role to Governor Ducey in the planning and implementation of biannual meetings with tribal leadership to discuss issues of mutual interest and concern. Traditionally hosted by the Governor's Office, each tribe is invited to join the Governor in a private roundtable discussion to address issues impacting tribal community members.

On request the Commission will also work with state agencies to enhance tribal outreach.

- ❖ The Commission continued to work with the AZ Department of Revenue to establish inter government agreements with tribal nations to ensure the proper collection of tobacco sales tax
- ❖ The Arizona Department of Health Services contacted the Commission to emphasize the importance of suicide prevention. In partnership with the Statewide Suicide Prevention Coordinator, Kelli Donley, we provided a seminar on culturally sensitive suicide prevention for native youth. During the spring, two additional seminars were developed and provided specifically for the tribal community.

Throughout the year the Executive Director and Commission members host meetings and attend events in order to establish a presence and remain involved in current issues.

- ❖ The Commission observed meetings by invitation from the Renewal of Hope Task Force. The Nahata Dzii Chapter of the Navajo Nation continued to protest the liquor licensing for one individual with four applications and submitted an urgent public request to Apache County. After coordinating a strategic opposition, the chapter prevailed in their effort.

20th ANNUAL INDIAN NATIONS AND TRIBES LEGISLATIVE DAY

In cooperation with the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, the annual tribal legislative day occurred on Tuesday, January 20th, 2015. The primary objective is to discuss issues of mutual interest; and pay

tribute to American Indian people and their contributions to the history, prosperity and cultural diversity of the United States. Beginning with a joint protocol session held in the Senate, we were honored to have a posting of the colors by the American Legion Post #60. This year's featured speakers included Chairwoman Sherry Counts of the Hualapai Nation, Chairman Herman Honanie of the Hopi Nation, and Chairman Thomas Beauty of the Yavapai-Apache Nation. In attendance were over 420 Individuals, 15 tribes represented, 32 state legislators, and other interested constituents. Some 30 organizations participated in a day long exhibit fair.

INFORMATION SEMINAR – CULTURALLY SENSITIVE SUICIDE PREVENTION FOR YOUTH

On January 20, a seminar on suicide prevention was offered to 88 participants to share information on best practices and take questions concerning culturally appropriate programming and care. More specifically:

- Suicide Prevention Resource Center
- Northern Arizona Regional Behavior Authority
- White Mountain Apache Suicide Surveillance System
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Morning Star Leadership Foundation

After answering questions on locating resources for persons experiencing suicidal thoughts and reviewing the signs of suicide the discussion turned to the cultural stigma of discussing suicide.

In a lot of Native American communities, suicide is thought of as taboo and something that shouldn't be talked about. How can we change this?

"In our community it was the same. When we first started working on the suicide surveillance system. Speaking about something negative makes it something positive. Our elders guided us. They said you have been identified by the creator as being the lead. You need to be able to stand up and speak about suicide prevention. We put together New Hope DVD. We shared that DVD. Our elders are in that DVD, if elders tell us it is okay to talk about suicide then we want them to be a part of it. ASIST trains you to talk about suicide directly, asking the questions that you need to ask. Our community may say that it is not okay to talk about but our elders have said it is okay and we need to be direct".

-White Mountain Apache Tribal Member

LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

During the 52nd Legislature, 1st Regular Session, three bills of tribal interest passed.

- ❖ SB1393 codifies a process for the Office of Vital Records to issue birth certificates to tribal members born before 1970.
- ❖ SB1080 expands the duty to report child abuse or neglect to include reporting to a tribal law enforcement or social services agency for any Indian minor who lives on a reservation.

Authorizes the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to share criminal justice information with a tribal social services agency.

As a state agency, the Commission of Indian Affairs respects the sovereign status of each of the 22 Indian nations and tribes. To advance government-to-government relationships with the Legislature, we host an Annual Indian Nations and Tribes Legislative Day and connect Tribal Leaders with their elected State Representative(s).

COMMISSION MEMBERS AND STAFF

Appointed Membership:

Ms. Lucinda Hughes Juan of the Tohono O'odham Nation
Mr. Derreck Wheeler of the White Mountain Apache Tribe (resigned effective January 2015)
Mr. Nathan Pryor of the Navajo Nation
Mr. Philbert Watahomigie of the Hualapai Nation
Mr. Buddy Rocha, Jr., of the Yavapai-Apache Nation
Mr. Francis Bradley, of the Navajo Nation
Mr. Dan Brooks – Member at Large
Ms. Leah Hubbard – Member at Large
Mr. Billie Spurlin – Member at Large (resigned effective January 2015)
Mr. Dave Castillo – Member at Large (non-profit)

Ex-Officio Membership:

Ms. Debora Norris on behalf of The Hon. Diane Douglas, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Mr. Michael Allison on behalf of Director Cara Christ, AZ Department of Health Services
Mr. Keith Watkins on behalf of Director Sandra Watkins, AZ Commerce Authority
Ms. Dawn Melvin on behalf of Director Sherry Henry, AZ Office of Tourism
Ms. Misty Klann on behalf of Director John Halikowski, AZ Department of Transportation
Ms. Courtney Coolidge on behalf of Director Dan Bergin, AZ Department of Gaming
Ms. Dawn Williams on behalf of The Hon. Mark Brnovich, AZ Attorney General
Ms. Mary Huyser on behalf of Director Timothy Jefferies, AZ Dept of Economic Security

Staff:

Ms. Kristine Fire Thunder, Executive Director
Ms. Kelly Hedman, Executive Assistant