National Congress of the American Indian
San Diego, California
October 18-24, 2015

I ultimately attended this conference as the official representative of the Tribe due to Bea's need to leave the conference early. I felt it necessary to attend all General Assemblies, seven in total, because of my role. The assemblies contained such things at the reports from the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, as well as votes for NCAI's governance and resolutions.

I also attended the Youth Honoring Luncheon, the National Native American "Just Move It!" Health Walk/Run, the Elders Honoring Luncheon, and the Gala Banquet. I also walked around the Marketplace, which is the NCAI's version of an expo or trade show. I also attended the area caucus meetings each morning. Presidential hopefuls Ben Carson, Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton all provided prerecorded addresses to the NCAI attendees. They can be found on YouTube.

Attached are the summaries from NCAI's official records.

National Congress of American Indians

2015 Newsletter: Thriving Communities, Driving Opportunities

72nd Annual Convention & Marketplace
San Diego, CA | October 18-23, 2015
Town and Country Resort & Convention Center

72nd Annual Convention & Marketplace

SAN DIEGO

OCTOBER 18 – 23, 2015

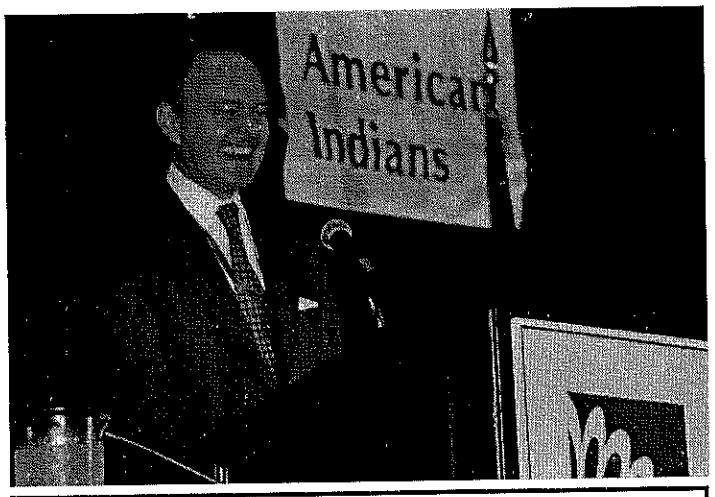
The NCAI 72nd Annual Convention & Marketplace was a huge success!

Beginning on Sunday, October 18, 2015 and continuing through Friday, October 23, 2015 at the Town & Country Resort in San Diego, California, the six-day convention was packed with speakers, sponsors, and attendees from around the country.

The energy around daily activities was palpable as attendees participated in seven General Assemblies, and over 60 sessions, committee meetings, caucuses, and receptions.

Emerging themes from the discussions during the convention focused around the "real work" necessary to create tangible outcomes and solutions to issues hindering Indian Country in the areas of climate change, sacred sites, health sovereignty, child welfare, water rights, food sovereignty, education, and more.

The convention showcased several voices from Washington, DC to speak on the hard issues impacting Native communities and their work on Capitol Hill and Federal agencies.



U.S. Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Kevin Washburn

NCAI General Counsel John Dossett and Native American Rights Fund Executive Director John Echohawk provided an update from the Tribal Supreme Court Project. Dossett and Echohawk emphasized the pending case of *Dollar General v. Mississippi Choctaw*, regarding tribal jurisdiction over consensual relationships with non-Indian businesses on reservation. This is an extremely important case for tribal sovereignty, and tribal leaders took action to communicate with their respective states Attorneys General.

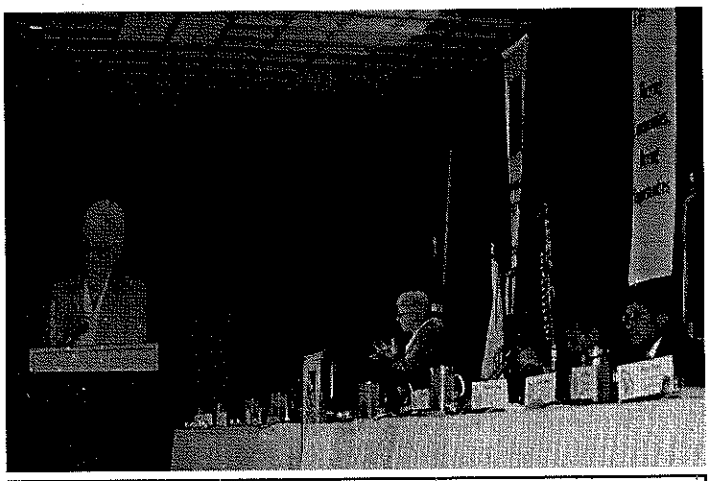
They also spoke about the Supreme Court decision to grant review *Nebraska v. Parker*, involving a question of reservation diminishment where the State is challenging whether establishments in the Village of Pender are subject to the Omaha Tribe's liquor licensing and tax regulations. This is also a very important case for reservation lands and jurisdiction, and the Project will be very busy this session of the Supreme Court.

For more information about the Supreme Court Update, contact NCAI General Counsel John Dossett via email at jdossett@ncai.org.

The First General Assembly on Monday was highlighted by U.S. Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Kevin Washburn when he announced on the NCAI stage his approval of the Yakima Nation's petition for retrocession of civil and criminal jurisdiction from the State of Washington.

In Administrator Gina McCarthy's Environmental Protection Agency Update she stated clearly that, "[The EPA is] striving to incorporate traditional ecological knowledge into programs and engaging tribal youth leaders of tomorrow."

Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN), delivered a passionate message and spoke about the role of Congress: "The bottom line folks, [this] Congress needs to get its act together. The issues facing Native youth must be a priority for our Congress. We know that we are failing Native students. We need to make these investments... we need to see a new list of priorities...we need to band together."



Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Gina McCarthy during her EPA Update

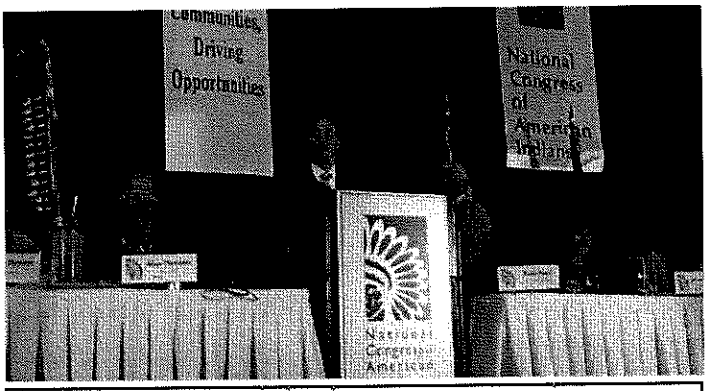
McCollum also spoke about her support for the Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act of 2015 (H.R. 511) stated, "I am proud to stand with Indian Country on hunting and fishing rights."

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Julian Castro said, "[HUD] will keep fighting to ensure every tribal family lives in dignity and in comfort."

Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN)

Mary Smith, the new Indian Health Service Deputy Director, took the podium and spoke about her goals for the future of Indian Country through the remainder of the Obama Administration.

"I am ready to hit the ground running, but I need



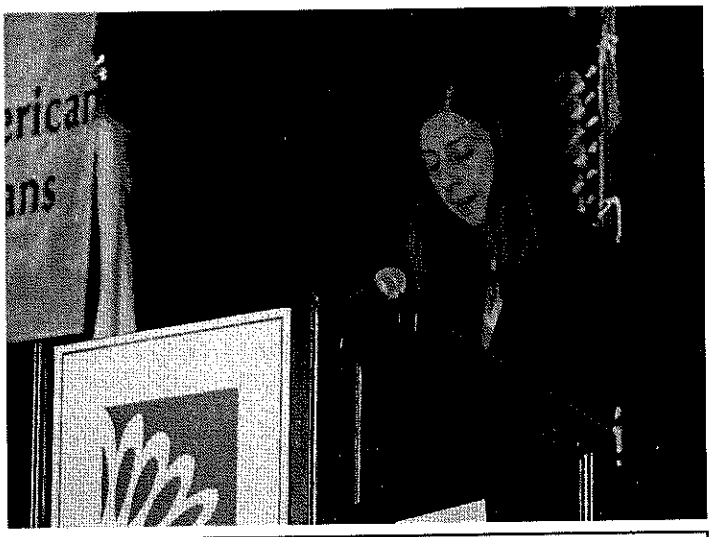
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Julian Castro

your help," said Smith. "I think many times Native Americans are invisible to people in this country. We can only do this together; we are not invisible we are resilient."

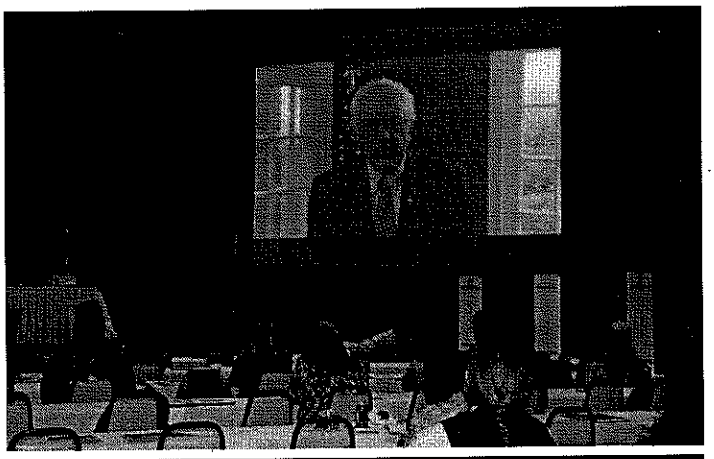
NCAI also gave the 2016 Presidential Candidates the opportunity to speak to the NCAI assembly. Three candidates submitted videos including: Hillary Clinton (Democrat), Ben Carson (Republican), and Bernie Sanders (Democrat).

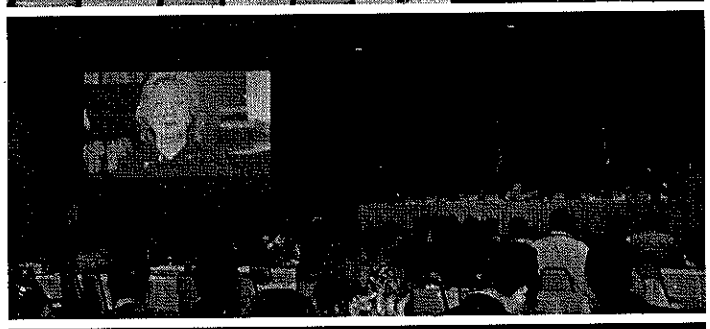
"NCAI's mission is to advocate on behalf of Indian Country. We will do this no matter who is in the White House," said Jackie Pata, Executive Director, NCAI.

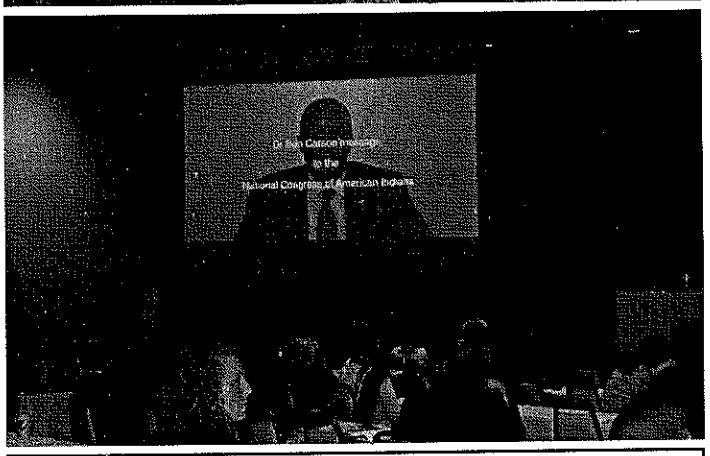
Monday also marked the kick off of the NCAI



Indian Health Service
Deputy Director Mary Smith





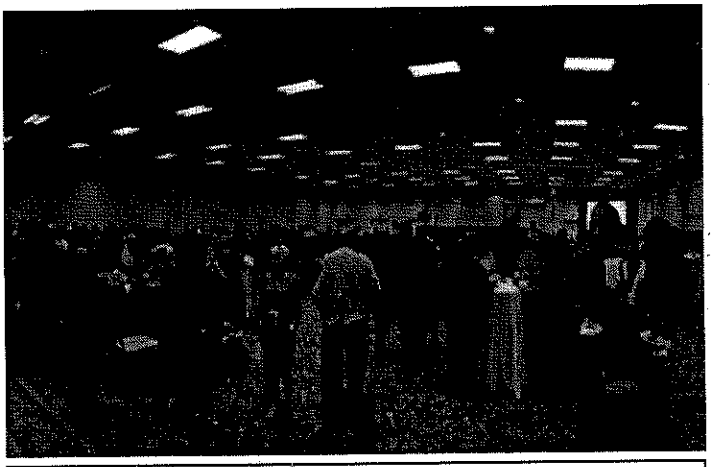


2016 Presidential Candidate Videos

Youth Commission agenda. An operational body of NCAI, the NCAI Youth Commission participated in their own sessions as well as the NCAI assembly at large.

Bringing the first official day to close, NCAI attendees gathered to celebrate and share at the Welcome Reception & Cultural Night on Monday evening with traditional foods and dancing.

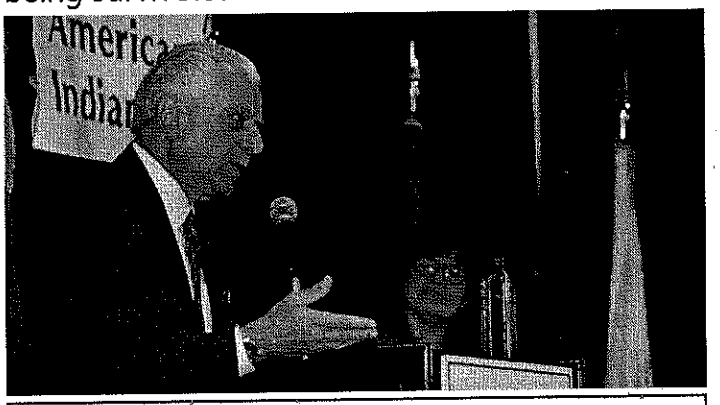
To prompt a conversation about trauma and its effects on the mind, body, and spirit, Dr. Vincent Felitti shared insights from his work leading the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. The



Welcome Reception & Cultural Night

ACE Study is one of the largest investigations into how early childhood maltreatment-- through abuse, neglect, substance use, etc. --can contribute to poor health in later life. He emphasized the need for healthy role models and support for parents and caregivers as well as commitment to address the role of trauma in our health.

Juxtaposing Dr. Felitti's dialogue, NCAI President Brian Cladoosby rhetorically asked, "How do we change that mindset from being victims to being survivors?"



Dr. Vincent Felitti, Co-Principal Investigator, Adverse Childhood Experience Study

For more information and to request chapters from the study, contact Dr. Vincent Felitti via email at vjfmdsdca@mac.com.

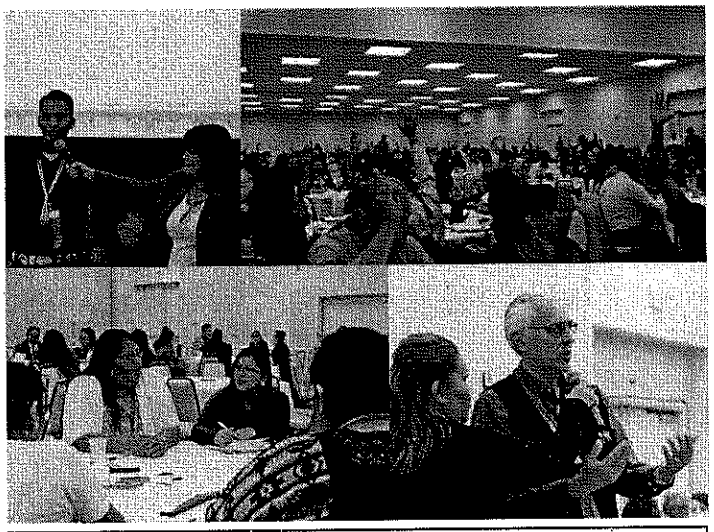
NCAI supporter and partner, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community also presented

their Seeds of Native Health: A Campaign for Indigenous Nutrition. Looking at the disparaging rates of diabetes and obesity, Seeds of Native Health looks to combat these health issues through access to healthy food. The effort includes grant-making, sharing of best practices, capacity-building, sponsored research, and educational initiatives. To learn more about the program, visit http://seedsofnativehealth.org.

Seeds of Native Health

A Campaign for Indigenous Nutrition

World Café was one of the most widely attended sessions of the week. The discussion sparked fantastic ideas and dialogue from tribal leaders, youth, and other attendees. The importance of cultural integrity played a large role in response to questions on how to make actionable change in today's communities. Other key themes included what it means to be loved, opening the lines of communication, and developing listening skills across generations.



NCAI Staff facilitates World Café discussion

On Tuesday, October 20, attendees joined the NCAI Youth Commission at the NCAI Youth Honoring Luncheon and NCAI Youth Leadership Awards. The luncheon, sponsored by San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, featured National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) Chairman Ernie Stevens, Jr. who presented awards to Native Education Raising Dedicated Students (NERDS) Founder Dahkota Franklin Kicking Bear Brown (Wilton Band of Miwok Indians) and Miss Indian Arizona Shasta Dazen (White Mountain Apache).

Stevens also presented an honorary award to 2015 SPORTS 'N SPOKES Junior Athlete of the Year and NCAI Youth presenter Noah Blue Elk Hotchkiss (Southern Ute/Southern Cheyenne/Caddo Tribe).

Award winners Dahkota Franklin Kicking Bear Brown and Noah Blue Elk Hotchkiss

Another consistent theme throughout the convention was the importance of Native Vote! Native Vote holds a special place in the heart of the NCAI staff, who were brave enough to provide the opening performance with their "Voting Shuffle" song and dance. The night was emceed by two Native Celebrities, Actor Alex Meraz, known for his portrayal of Paul in the Twilight Saga, and Actor Gil Birmingham, known for his portrayal as Billy Black in the Twilight Saga. However, the NCAI Youth stole the show with their rendition of Pitch

Native Vote

Every Vote Counts

Perfect. The night was filled with trivia and prizes, a photobooth, and a message from Indian Country friend, former Senator Mark Begich (AK).

NCAI is always looking to connect with new Native Vote Coordinators. Please contact NCAI Policy Research Fellow Jalene Herron (jherron@ncai.org) to become a coordinator for your community! Coordinators are needed!

If you missed the performances, visit the NCAI YouTube channel for the recap at https://www.youtube.com/user/NCAI1944.

NCAI Youth Commission Perform at Native Vote Lip Sync Battle

Announced initially in September, the "First Kids 1st Initiative" formally came together during the Fourth General Assembly with a signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA), the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), and the National Indian Health Board (NIHB).

The MOU states that the First Kids 1st Initiative, "will convey that Indian Country is choosing to put its children first as our number one priority."

The four Executive Directors, NCAI Executive Director Jackie Pata, NICWA Executive Director Sarah Kastelic, NIEA Executive Director Ahniwake Rose, and NIHB Executive Director Stacy Bohlen stood in solidarity and signed the MOU into action.

A highlight every year during the convention

Executive Directors of NCAI, NICWA, NIEA, and NIHB sign historic MOU

is the National Native American Just Move It! Healthy Lifestyles Walk, Run, and Rally, and this year was no different. Tribal leaders, elders, youth, and attendees ran, jogged, and walked to inspire healthy choices for Indian Country. Participants received incentives from partners Nike N7, Indian Health Service, and NCAI.

Attendees and NCAI Staff participate in Health Walk

Continuing the theme of inspiration, the NCAI Youth Co-Presidents Tyler Owens and Jared Massey spoke to the assembly and stressed the importance of including youth in the discussions and decisions that affect their communities.

National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) Executive Director Sarah Kastelic and NICWA President Gil Vigil also addressed the assembly to advocate for Native youth.

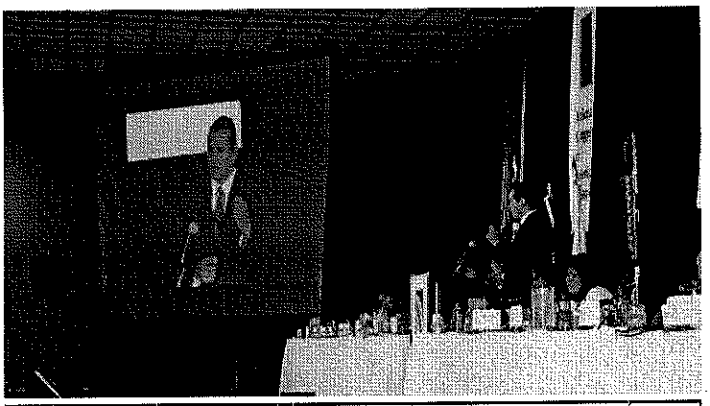
"[ICWA] is under attack, more importantly are the children that this act protects. Those are the kids we want to protect," said Vigil. "We are placing our kids in danger. Please take more responsibility on the seriousness of this issue. We can't let that happen.

NICWA President Gil Vigil and Executive Director Sarah Kastelic

Executive Director Bill Mendoza of the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education spoke on the somber subject of suicide amongst Native youth and announced the new School Environment Listening Sessions Final Report focusing on Native youth.

To develop the report, the White House conducted a national listening tour which made stops in nine states and throughout Indian Country.

"We will be championing this report over and over until it is heard," said Mendoza. "Our time for decision making on these issues is now."

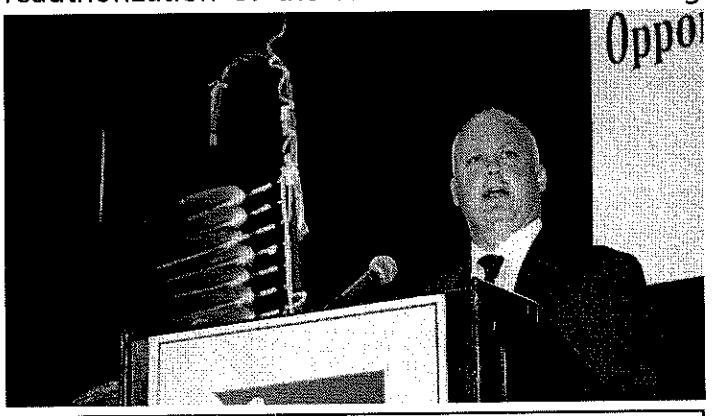


William (Bill) Mendoza, Executive Director of the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education

The report can be found on the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education U.S. Department of Education website http://sites.ed.gov/whianiane/files/2015/10/school-environment-listening-sessions-final-report.pdf.

Mike Andrews, Staff Director and Chief Counsel of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, provided an update on the work of the Committee. Giving a "shout out" to Tony Walters for the bi-partisan effort in the Committee, and reaffirmed Senator Barrasso and Senator Tester's commitment to advocating for Indian Country.

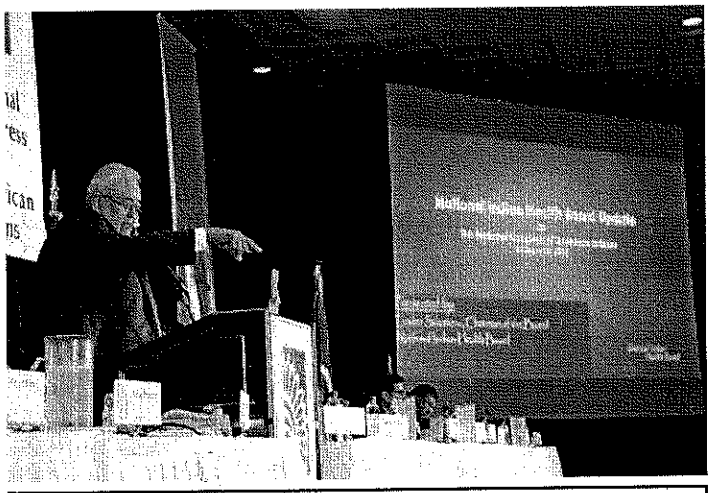
Andrews went on to speak about a number of pieces of legislation the Committee is currently focusing on including: The Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Amendments Act, the reauthorization of the Native American Housing



Mike Andrews, Staff Director & Chief Council, Senate Committee on Indian Affairs

Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA), the IRRIGATION Act, the Survive Act, and the Interior Improvement Act.

"We can't do it alone, your continued advocacy is vitally important and [a] unified approach is the best strategy," said Andrews. "Please support those bills, and let us know of the bills you cannot get behind. We are here to do the work."

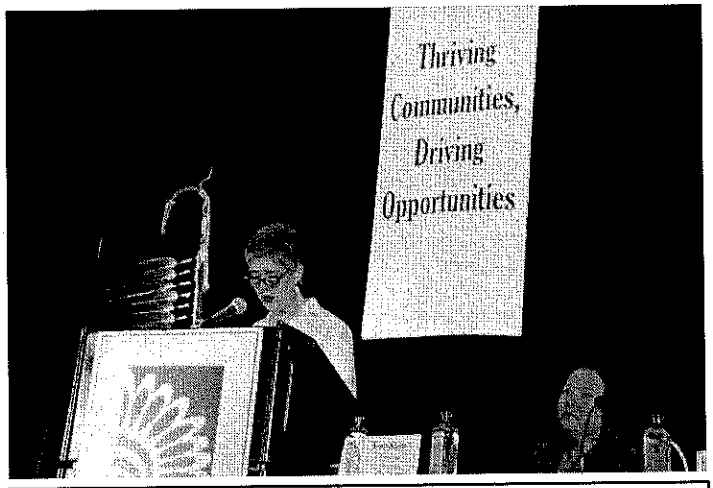


Lester Secatero, Chairman, National Indian Health Board (NIHB)

Continuing policy discussion, National Indian Health Board (NIHB) Chairman Lester Secatero noted a number of challenges in Indian health care during his presentation, including the lack of access to the proper technology for doctors and the Employer Mandate putting a financial strain on Native communities.

Mary Bucci, Chief of 2020 Partnerships and Outreach at the U.S. Census Bureau, discussed the Census' upcoming tribal consultation to review an operations plan, listen to the thoughts of tribal leaders about issues affecting their communities, and to increase collaboration between the Census Office and Indian Country.

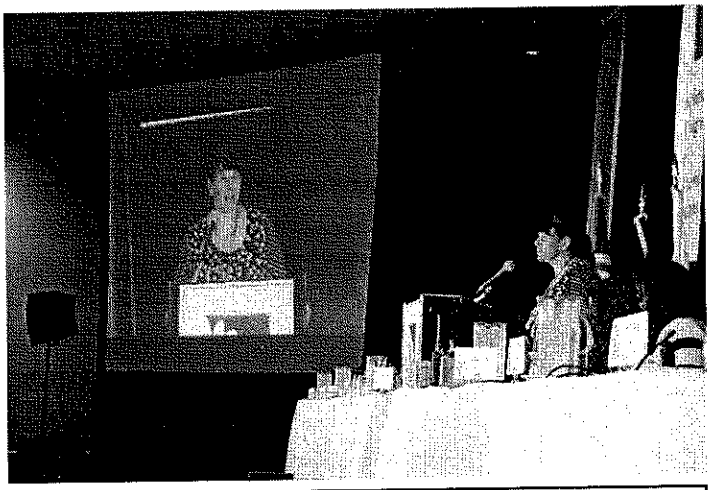
Marcia Hurd, Senior Counsel to the Director, Office of Tribal Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, spoke about Tribal Access to Criminal Databases. Hurd reported that tribes often face a number of barriers within state networks and that DOJ is working to fix the issue. Currently, DOJ has enacted



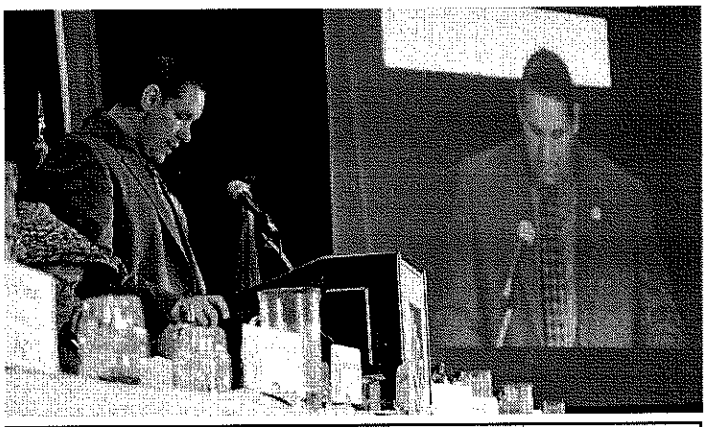
Mary Bucci, Chief of the 2020 Partnerships and Outreach, U.S. Census Bureau

a companion program, the Tribal Access Program (TAP), which any tribal social service agency can access by applying online at no cost. Visit http://www.justice.gov/tribal/tribal-access-program-tap for more information.

Jeff Grubbe, Chairman of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, spoke about the Band's Water Rights and current 9th Circuit litigation regarding their rights to ground water. Chairman Grubbe stressed the importance of tribal water rights advocacy and the need for support in the appeal of the Band's 9th Circuit case to reclaim their ground water. He called for the body to join the Southern California Tribal Chairman's Association Amicus Brief.



Marcia Hurd, Senior Counsel to the Director, Office of Tribal Justice, U.S. Department of Justice



Jeff Grubbe, Chairman,
Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

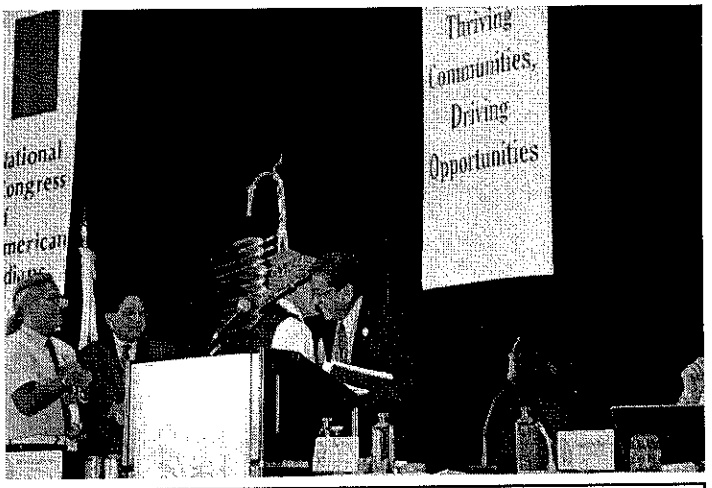
Luis Alejo, Assemblymember, California State Assembly, and NCAI National Native Youth Cabinet Member, Dahkota Brown, gave the Mascot Update in the wake of the passing of the California Racial Mascots Act, signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown the week prior to the NCAI convention. The law bans all public schools in the state from using the name "R*dskins" as an athletic team name, mascot, or nickname by no later than January 1, 2017.

The end of the week was highlighted by a special guest presentation by Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye. The historical event was met by applause and warm smiles from both President Begaye and President Cladoosby.

Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye addressed the body regarding the Gold King Mine Disaster

Luis Alejo and Dahkota Brown give Mascot Update

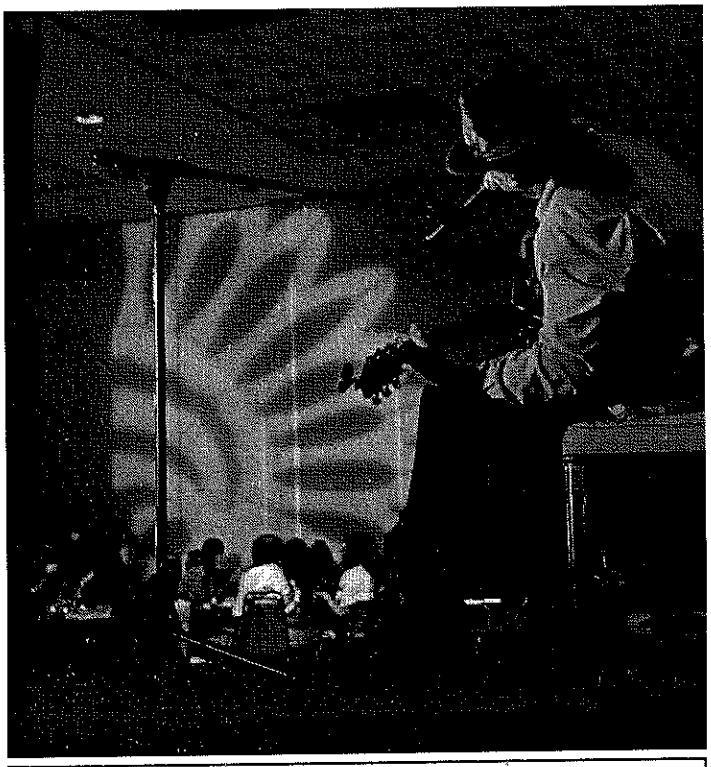
and lack of response by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the White House. President Begaye explained that the spill greatly impacted Navajo farmers and their citizens' drinking water, forcing the Nation to haul water to those affected for two months. The Nation continues to see a lack of response from the federal government on these issues.



Navajo Nation Russell Begaye and
NCAI President Brian Cladoosby

"Let's continue standing together and fight for our land, water rights, culture and keep fighting," said President Begaye. "We have yet to be given authority [over our] minerals and [are] asking NCAI to get behind the bills to the surface and minerals beneath the land and ability to control those resources."

Thursday also marked a special luncheon and the annual Gala Banquet. In conjunction with NCAI, the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians sponsored



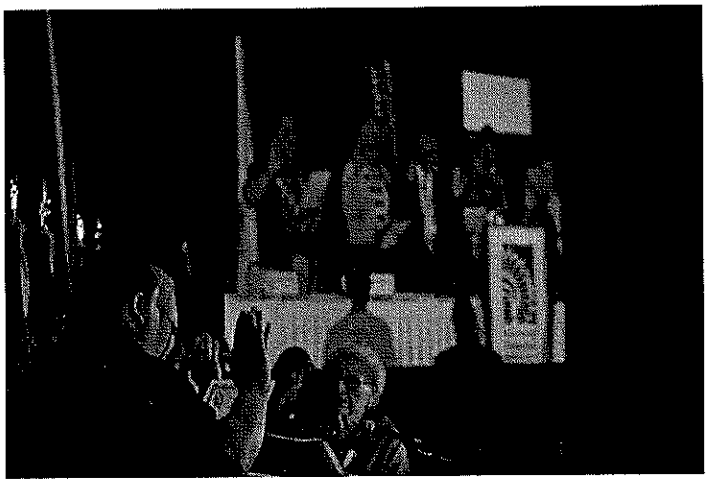
NCAI Annual Gala Banquet

the Elders' Honoring Lunch to celebrate our tribal elders and show them the great appreciation they deserve.

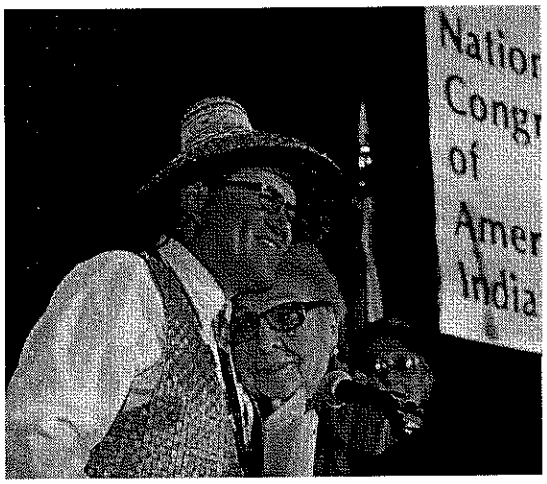
The annual Gala Banquet wrapped up Thursday's events, featuring a musical performance by Keith Secola, Award Winning Native American Musician. The Gala Banquet attendees enjoyed dinner and an ad hoc round dance which ended in a sing along on the Gala stage. A special thank you for Keith Secola for participating in the event, and a very big thank you to Bank of America for their sponsorship of the event.

NCAI elections played a large role during the convention and included the election of the NCAI Executive Board Officers for President, 1st Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and NCAI Area Vice-Presidents. All officers were sworn in on Friday, October 23, 2015 during the Seventh General Assembly. Below are the newly elected and sworn in officers of NCAI.

NCAI Executive Director, NCAI Board Officers ,and NCAI Youth Cabinet member Dahkota Brown



NCAI Board Administrative Officers:



NCAI President:
Brian Cladoosby, Chairman, Swinomish Indian Tribal Community

NCAI 1st Vice President:
Randy Noka, Councilman, Narragansett Tribe

NCAI Secretary:
Aaron Payment, Chairperson, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians

NCAI Treasurer:
W. Ron Allen, Chairman, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe

Area Vice Presidents:

ALASKA:
Jerry Isaac, CEO, Native Village of Tanacross

MIDWEST:
Roger Rader, Tribal Council, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi

PACIFIC:
Jack Potter, Jr., Chairman, Redding Rancheria

SOUTHERN PLAINS:
Liana Onnen, Chairwoman, Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation

EASTERN OKLAHOMA:
Joe Byrd, Speaker of the Nation, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma

NORTHEAST:
Lance Gumbs, Shinnecock Indian Nation

ROCKY MOUNTAIN:
Darrin Old Coyote, Chairman, Crow Nation

SOUTHWEST:
Joe Garcia, Councilman, Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo

GREAT PLAINS:
Leander McDonald, President, United Tribes Technical College

NORTHWEST:
Fawn Sharp, President, Quinault Nation

SOUTHEAST:
Larry Townsend, Lumbee Tribe

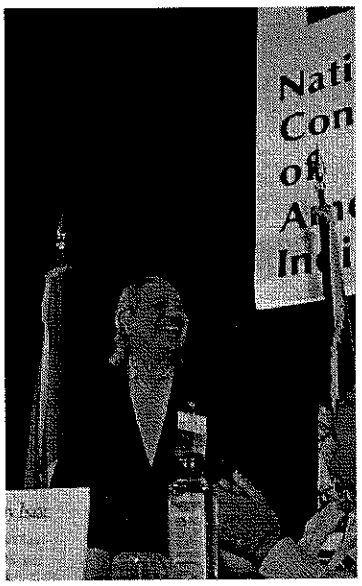
WESTERN:
Bruce Ignacio, Representative, Ute Indian Tribe

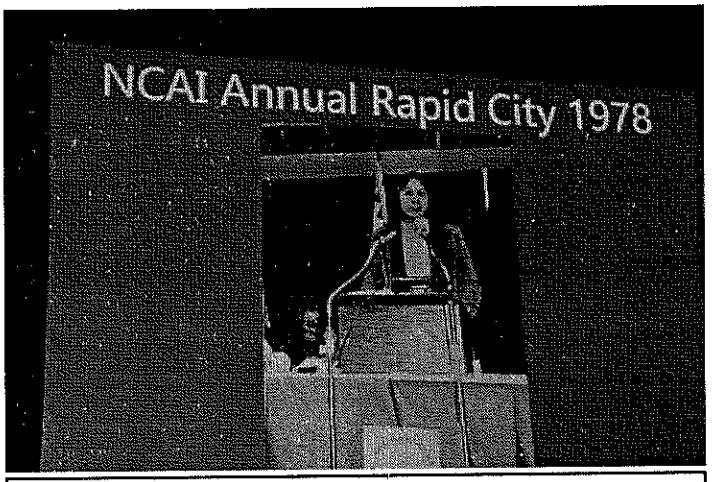
Alongside the swearing in of officers during the final General Assembly, the body passed 60 resolutions. To review all resolutions, please visit http://www.ncai.org/resolutions/2015-annual-resolutions.

NCAI extends a very special thank you to all of those who made the 72nd Annual Convention & Marketplace the successful event it was including

sponsors, volunteers, local planning committee, and NCAI staff for all of their hard work, and continued commitment to Indian Country.

Congratulations to Native American Rights Fund (NARF) Executive Director John Echohawk celebrating his 45th anniversary this November with the organization. Echohawk has been with NARF for its entire 45-year history, and has served as the executive director since 1977.





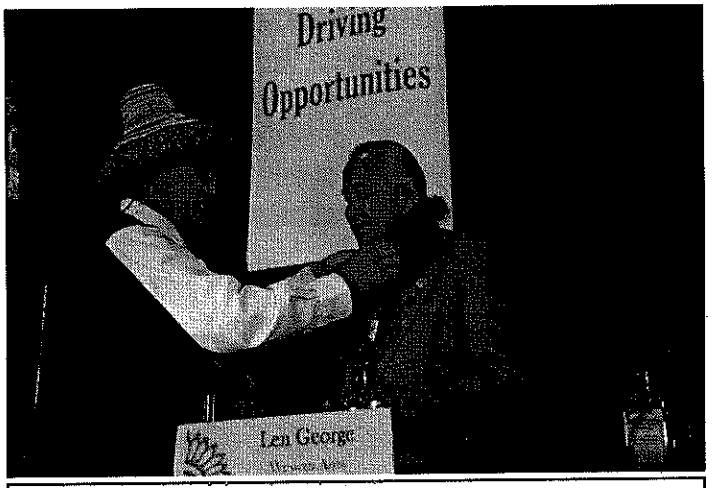
Congratulations John Echohawk on your 45th Anniversary!

Thank you to the Local Planning Committee Chair Rosemary Morillo, Chairwoman of the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians, Committee participants, and California tribes for assisting with sponsorships and encouraging tribal leadership and members to register for the conference.

A big thank you to the Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation for hosting such an amazing Welcome and Cultural Celebration at the beginning of the week. And warm gratitude to Volunteer Coordinator Hedi Bogda (Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe), who came to NCAI for the week from Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians, for coordinating all of the hardworking volunteers this week, including Tribal TANF and North Fork Rancheria.

Thank you to NCAI staff alumnus Jason McCarty for taking pictures all week and Cherokee Nation for letting NCAI borrow him for the event and to Ricki McCarroll, Nuna Consulting Group Founder & Principal Consultant, who put together the communications pieces during the conference.

Congratulations to the NCAI staff for all of your hard work and anniversary milestones achieved with the organization!



Deputy Director Robert Holden receives a gift of appreciation

Deputy Director
Robert Holden
(30 years)

General Counsel
John Dossett
(20 years)

Office Manager
Nketia Agyeman
(20 years)

Director of External Affairs
Jamie Gomez
(16 years)

Director of Outreach
Bernida Humetawa
(13 years)

Budget/Policy Analyst and
PRC Program Manager
Amber Ebarb
(12 years)

Legislative Associate
Gwen Salt
(10 years)

Director of Conferences & Events
Annarae Steele
(7 years)

Chief Financial Officer
Sam Owl
(6 years)

Advisor to Partnership for Tribal Governance
Sherry Salway Black (6 years)

Senior Systems Administrator
Chris Pata
(5 years)

Meetings & Events Coordinator
Kellcee Baker
(5 years)

Thank you again to all of our sponsors, for without you none of this is possible.

Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation –
Diamond & Tote Bag Sponsor

Bank of America –
Gala Banquet Sponsor

San Manuel Band of Mission Indians –
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Make sure to check out the coverage from the week on the NCAI Facebook, Twitter (@NCAI1944), YouTube, and Flickr accounts!

National Congress of American Indians

WHY NCAI?

Are you an NCAI Member?

NCAI is a membership-driven organization. Our membership is a strong representation of the many nations, villages, communities, and individuals that constitute the whole of Indian Country.

The organization engages in both legislative and administrative advocacy on behalf of its membership. Moreover, the NCAI strives to ensure that all member tribes and individuals are informed and educated about all such issues affecting the well-being of Indian nations.

NCAI's membership consists of six categories:

1. Tribal Membership
2. Individual Indian Membership
3. Individual Associate Membership
4. Individual Indian Lifetime Membership
5. Individual Associate Lifetime Membership
6. Associate Organization Membership

Want to learn more? Visit http://www.ncai.org/get-involved/membership.

Already a NCAI Member and need to renew?

For Tribal Membership visit http://www.ncai.org/membership/2015-2016_Tribal_Membership_Forms.pdf.

For Individual Membership visit http://www.ncai.org/membership/2015-2016_Individual_Membership_Form.pdf.

Membership lasts from Annual Convention to Annual Convention.

72nd Annual Convention & Marketplace

SAN DIEGO

OCTOBER 18 – 23, 2015

National Congress of American Indians

Daily Newsletter: Tuesday, October 20, 2015

The National Congress of American Indians 72nd Annual Convention & Marketplace is off and running to a fantastic beginning! Kicking off with pre-meetings on Saturday, October 17, 2015, NCAI attendees convened to discuss issues on climate change, tribal, state and county relations, strategic usage of tribal data, violence against women, and other important meetings.

"When the rights of one of our tribes are diminished, the rights of all of our tribes are diminished."
-NCAI President Cladoosby

Calling the First General Assembly to order on Monday, NCAI President Brian Cladoosby highlighted tribal rights while NCAI Executive Director Jackie Pata acknowledged the work of NCAI in the current election climate.

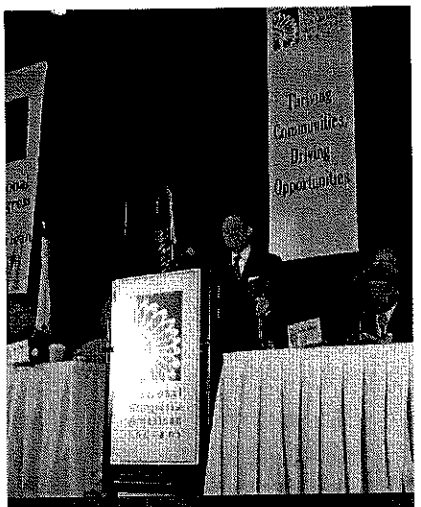
"NCAI's mission is to advocate on behalf of Indian Country. We will do this no matter who is in the White House," said Pata.

Speakers following Pata included NCAI General Counsel John Dossett, and Native American Rights Fund Executive Director John Echohawk who gave the Supreme Court Update.

Kevin Washburn, United States Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, energized to the room with a number of announcements. Among them, Washburn stated his approval for the Yakima Nation's petition for retrocession of civil and criminal jurisdiction from the State of Washington. His announcement was met with an outpouring of applauds and nods from the audience.

Registration is Open!

Washburn also stressed the importance of inclusion of urban Indian populations around the nation with the mandate for mail out ballots for all tribal elections moving forward. He additionally highlighted the need for "justice for Native Hawaiians" and for Native Hawaiian federal recognition.

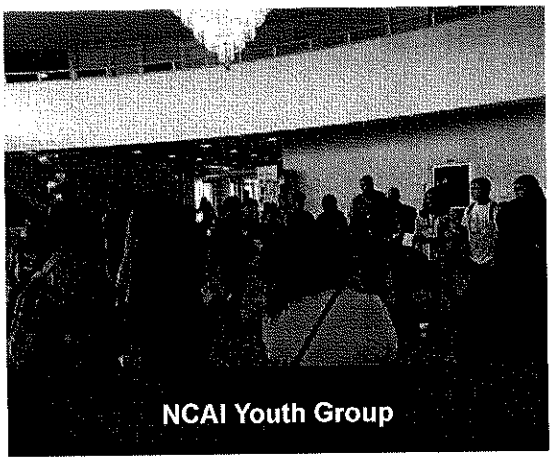


Assistant Secretary Kevin Washburn

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Gina McCarthy gave the Environmental Protection Agency update and said, "[the EPA is] striving to incorporate traditional ecological knowledge into programs and engaging tribal youth leaders of tomorrow."

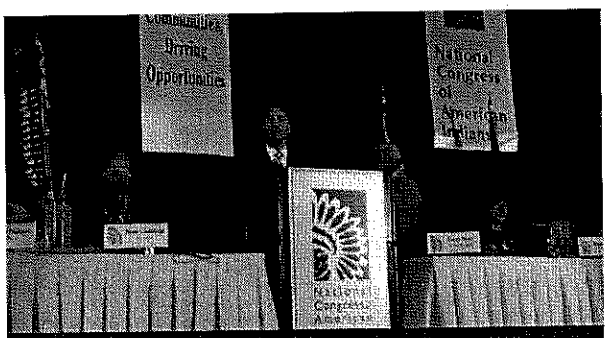
Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN), delivered a passionate message and spoke about the role of Congress.

"The bottom line folks, [this] Congress needs to get its act together. The issues facing Native youth must be a priority for our Congress. We know that we are failing Native students," said Congresswoman McCollum. "We need to make these investments...we need to see a new list of priorities...we need to band together."


NCAI Youth Group

McCollum also spoke about her support for the Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act of 2015 (H.R. 511) stating, "I am proud to stand with Indian Country on hunting and fishing rights."

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Julian Castro said, "[HUD] will keep fighting to ensure every tribal family lives in dignity and in comfort."

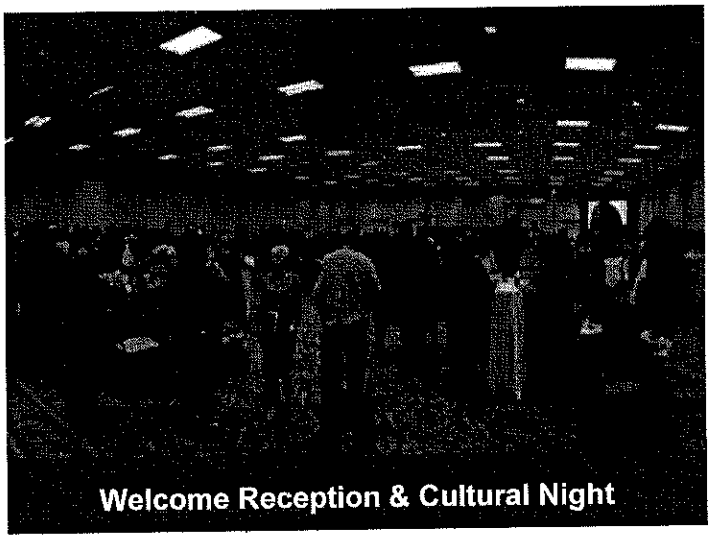

Secretary Castro

The new Indian Health Service Deputy Director Mary Smith spoke about her commitment to Indian Country while serving in the Clinton Administration and that she would bring the same passion in her new position at IHS.

"I am ready to hit the ground running, but I need your help," said Smith. "I think many times Native Americans are invisible to people in this country. We can only do this together; we are not invisible we are resilient."

Closing out the Second General Assembly, the body heard from three presidential candidates via pre-taped videos, including Hillary Clinton (Democrat), Ben Carson (Republican), and Bernie Sanders (Democrat).

Running concurrently to the General Assembly, the Youth Track was in full swing with tribal youth engaged in discussions around harmful mascots and strategic leadership trainings.


Welcome Reception & Cultural Night

Bringing the first official day to close, NCAI attendees gathered to celebrate and share in traditional foods and dancing during the Welcome Reception & Cultural Night.

Catch all of the action here at NCAI with Facebook, Twitter (@NCAI1944), and the NCAI app! Use #NCAIAnnual2015 to stay connected!

Stay tuned for tomorrow's daily newsletter to capture all the happenings around the 72nd Annual Convention & Marketplace.

National Congress of American Indians

72nd Annual Convention & Marketplace

SAN DIEGO

OCTOBER 18 – 23, 2015

National Congress of American Indians

Daily Newsletter: Tuesday, October 20, 2015

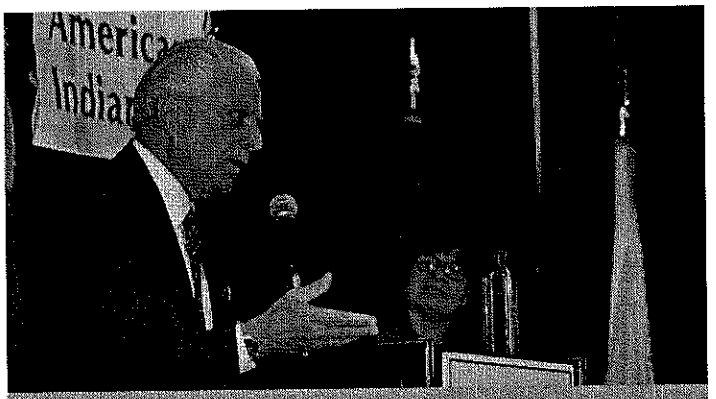
The Town and Country Resort buzzed with activity from subcommittee meetings to panel discussions and meetings in the halls.

Third General Assembly was filled to the brim with attendees to listen to the morning speakers including Dr. Vincent Felitti, Co-Principal Investigator, Adverse Childhood Experience Study. Other speakers included Regis Pecos on the role of core values in governance and renewal, and Paulette Jordan on engaging the citizens of Indian Country and beyond.

According to Dr. Felitti, the study found a large portion of the population with no experience of supportive parenting might benefit from a strong tangible example through storytelling to compare supportive versus destructive parenting.

Asking a rhetorical question during the question and answer session NCAI President Cladoosby asked, "How do we change that mindset from being victims to being survivors?"

For more information and to request chapters from the study, contact Dr. Vincent Felitti via email at vjfmdsdca@mac.com.



Dr. Vincent Felitti

World Café

World Café brought together a fantastic discussion and sharing of ideas by tribal leaders, youth, and other attendees. The importance of cultural integrity played a large role in response to questions on how to make actionable change in today's communities. Other key themes included what it means to be loved opening the lines of communication, and developing listening skills across generations.

Native Vote Reception

The Native Vote Talent Show/Lip Sync Battle rounded out the program on Tuesday evening. Kicking off the performances were none other than the NCAI staff with the "Voting Shuffle". However, the NCAI Youth stole the show with their rendition of Pitch Perfect. If you missed the performances catch the recap on the NCAI app later today!

Are you participating in social media? Join the conversation on Facebook, Twitter (@NCAI1944), and the NCAI app! Use #NCAIAnnual2015 to stay connected!

Afternoon Sessions

One of the many great afternoon sessions was a panel discussion on Building a Sustainable Economy by aligning business priorities with cultural ones. Experienced tribal leaders shared stories on values that balance profitability and caring for tribal citizens. It included insight into youth and workforce development, good governance, engaging with tribal members, even words of wisdom from moms!

Building a Sustainable Economy: Strategies for Aligning Your Nation's Corporate Priorities with its Cultural and Social Ones. (Left to Right) Tom Acevedo, CEO, S&K Technologies, Anthony Mallott, President and CEO, Sealaska Corporation, Lance Morgan, President & CEO, Ho-Chunk, Inc., Susan White, Trust Director, Oneida Indian Nations of Wisconsin, and Joseph Kalt, Co-Founder and Co-Director, Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development.

Stay tuned for tomorrow's daily newsletter to capture all the happenings around the 72nd Annual Convention & Marketplace.

National Congress of American Indians

72nd Annual Convention & Marketplace
SAN DIEGO
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National Congress of American Indians

Daily Newsletter: Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Executive Directors of NCAI, NICWA, NIEA, and NIHB at MOU Signing.

The "First Kids 1st Initiative" took center stage during the Fourth General Assembly with a signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA), the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), and the National Indian Health Board (NIHB).

According to the MOU, the First Kids 1st Initiative, "will convey that Indian Country is choosing to put its children first as our number one priority." After her remarks, NCAI Executive Director Jackie Pata joined NICWA Executive Director Sarah Kastelic, NIEA Executive Director Ahniwake Rose, and NIHB Executive Director Stacy Bohlen in signing the document.

Daniel Craig McCool, Professor of Political Science, University of Utah, gave the Native Vote Update and highlighted the importance of Native voting rights litigation in setting the precedence for driving Native Vote legislative policies.

"What matters now is registration drives, getting out the Native vote," said McCool. "That is what is going to change policy after 65 years of struggle—getting out the Native vote."

NCAI is connecting Native Vote Coordinators. Please contact NCAI Deputy Director Robert Holden (rholden@ncai.org) or NCAI Policy Research Fellow Jalene Herron (jherron@ncai.org) to become a coordinator for your community.

Honoring Nations brought together six finalists for its 2015 award, who each shared a short presentation on their projects within their communities. The presentations spanned from education of youth through community infrastructure.

"I've been told, 'Indians don't think big enough,' but I dream big!" said Lance Morgan, President & CEO, Ho-Chunk, Inc. during his presentation.

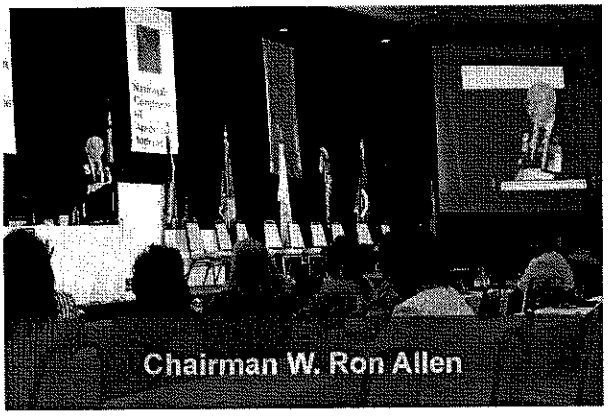
Lance Morgan, President & CEO, Ho-Chunk, Inc.

Nominations and Speeches for NCAI Board Administrative Offices were next on the agenda. First, Mark Macarro Tribal Chairman of the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians in Southern California nominated Brian Cladoosby (Swinomish) for NCAI President. With no other

nominees, Juana Majel-Dixon (Pauma Band of Mission Indians) moved to have the Assembly cast unanimous consent for Brian Cladoosby to be elected to a second term as President of NCAI.

There were two nominations for the position of First Vice-President. Mary Ann Andreas (Morongo Band of Mission Indians) nominated Juana Majel-Dixon for the position of First Vice President and Hiawatha Brown (Narragansett Tribe) nominated Randy Noka for the position of First Vice President.

W. Ron Allen (Jamestown S'Kllallam) nominated Aaron Payment, Chairperson of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe, for the position of the Office of the Secretary of NCAI. Being the sole nominee, Chairperson Payment was elected as Secretary of NCAI by unanimous consent.

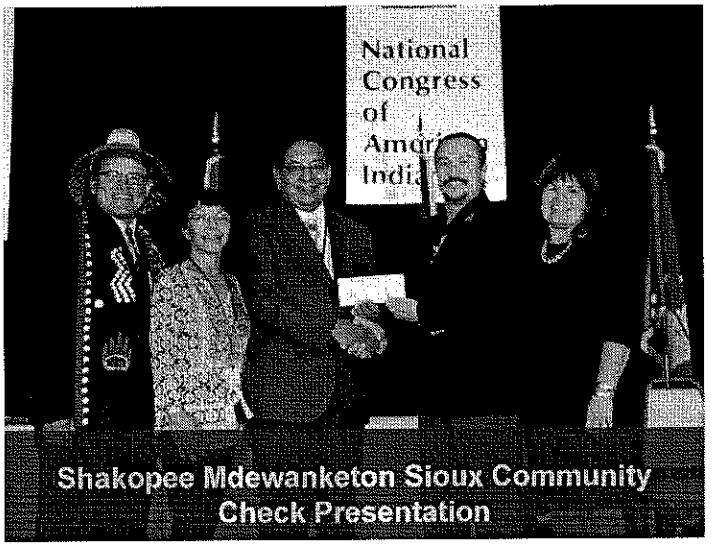


Chairman W. Ron Allen

For the final Executive Board position, Jefferson Keel (Chickasaw Nation) nominated W. Ron Allen, Chairman of the Jamestown S'Kllallam Tribe, for the position of Treasurer. With no other nominees, Chair Allen was elected as Treasurer of NCAI by unanimous consent.

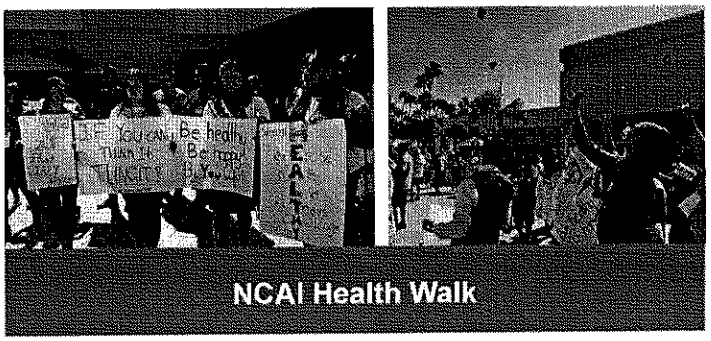
NCAI received two very generous donations to help support our Native youth and core operations. Roche Diagnostics announced that it will try to give $20,000 to the health scholarship for each NCAI conference. Last year, nine students benefited from the Roche Diagnostics health scholarship. Vice-Chairman Keith Anderson and Treasurer-Secretary Lori Watso from the Shakopee Mdewanketon Sioux Community presented NCAI with a donation check for $100,000 to support our organization's work again this year.

NCAI would like to thank Roche Diagnostics and Shakopee for their continued partnership and generosity in supporting NCAI and Indian Country.



Shakopee Mdewanketon Sioux Community Check Presentation

The highlight of the day was the National Native American Just Move It! Healthy Lifestyles Walk, Run, and Rally where attendees walked and ran over a half a mile in support of healthier lifestyles for Native communities. Participants received incentives from partners Nike N7 and IHS.



NCAI Health Walk

Breakout session presentations by thought leaders inspired conversation and dialogue amongst tribal leaders and attendees in the areas of water rights, Native youth issues, Native Vote, cultural protection, workforce development, tribal homeland security, international advocacy, food sovereignty, and Indian education.

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72nd Annual Convention & Marketplace

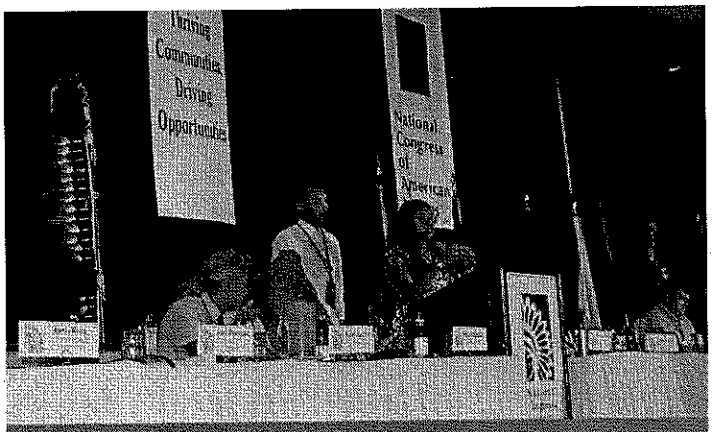
SAN DIEGO

OCTOBER 18 – 23, 2015

National Congress of American Indians

Daily Newsletter: Thursday, October 22, 2015

Youth played a big role in the Fifth General Assembly. Taking the podium to give the Youth Commission Report were Co-Presidents Tyler Owens and Jared Massey. Tyler and Jared spoke about their experience with the Youth Commission and the importance of the continued work between tribal leaders, including involving the youth as much as possible during their decision making process.



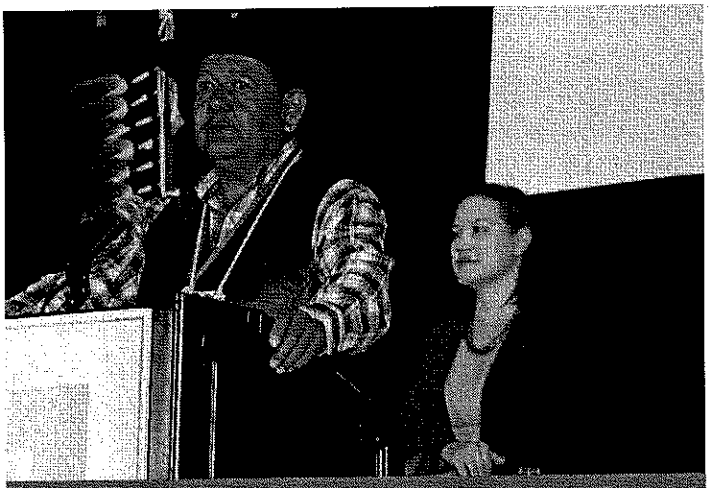
Taylor Owens and Jared Massey, Co-Presidents of NCAI Youth Commission

MaryAnn McGovern, Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Task Force Co-Chair, provided an update on the Task Force's work and stressed the need for tribal leaders to work on the TANF re-authorization.

Jefferson Keel, Lt. Governor of the Chickasaw Nation, addressed the assembly in a special presentation during the Technology Task Force Update and presented Geoffrey Blackwell with a blanket to thank him for his work in Indian Country. During the Gaming Update, Ernie Stevens, Jr., Chairman, National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA), stressed the importance of Native youth and praised the continued work on VAWA, TLOA, Tribal Tax Fairness Act, and General Welfare Exclusion Act in Indian Country.

Chairman Stevens also announced that Noah Hotchkiss and Dahkota Brown will serve as the first ambassadors to the new NIGA Native Youth Initiative.

National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) Executive Director Sarah Kastelic gave the ICWA Update alongside NICWA President Gil Vigil.



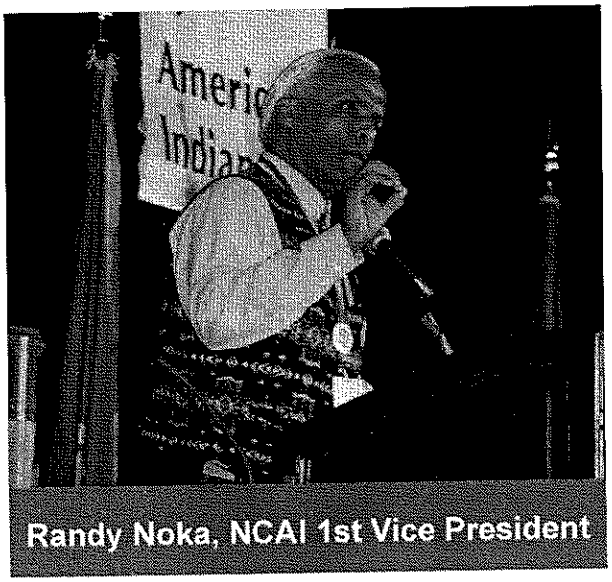
NICWA President Gil Vigil and Executive Director Sarah Kastelic

"[ICWA] is under attack, more importantly are the children that this act protects. Those are the kids we want to protect," said Vigil. "We are placing our kids in danger. Please take more responsibility on the seriousness of this issue. We can't let that happen."

Vigil further discussed the need for resources to fight additional litigation like the Baby Veronica case and move the needle for the youth in Indian Country. He called on tribal leaders to help with the cause to protect our children.

Kastelic noted the influence of media and importance of public relations strategy when it comes to high profile cases like the Baby Veronica case. She stressed the importance of training spokespeople to be on the media front lines telling the facts.

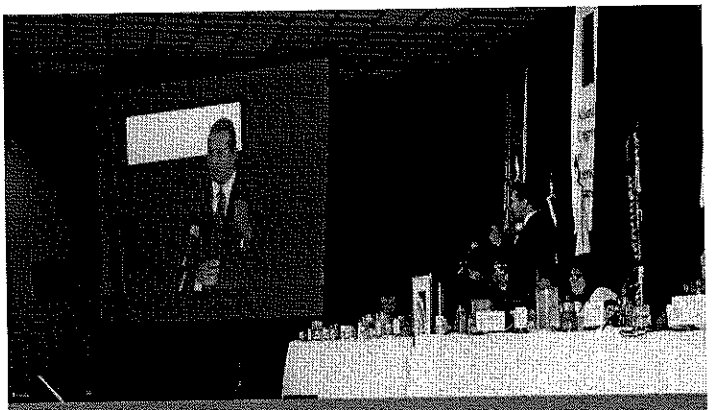
Mid-morning, the NCAI Election Committee announced the winner of the NCAI 1st Vice President election, Mr. Randy Noka. Chairman W. Ron Allen (Jamestown S'Klallam) moved for unanimous consent that Randy Noka be recognized as NCAI's 1st Vice President.



Randy Noka, NCAI 1st Vice President

Executive Director Bill Mendoza of the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education gave the Education Update. Mendoza spoke on a somber subject of suicide in Native youth across the nation and announced the new School Environment Listening Sessions Final Report focusing on Native youth.

To develop the report, the White House conducted a national listening tour which made stops in nine states and throughout Indian Country. The study found that the

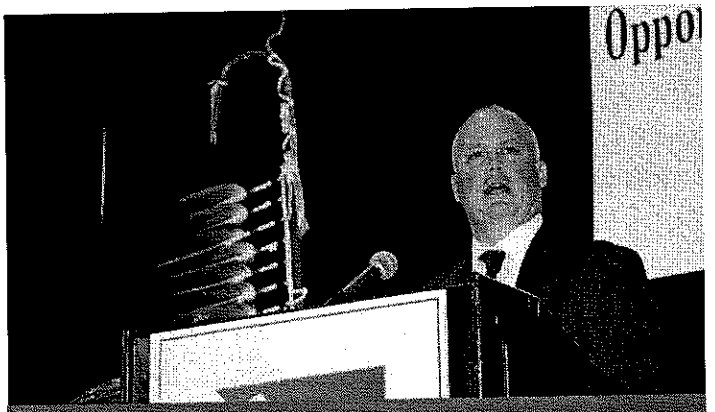

William (Bill) Mendoza, Executive Director of the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education

use of negative stereotypes in educational systems and the lack of positive imagery in schools has a harmful impact on the daily lives of Native students.

"We will be championing this report over and over until it is heard," said Mendoza. "Our time for decision making on these issues is now."

The report can be found on the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education U.S. Department of Education website at http://sites.ed.gov/whianiane/files/2015/10/school-environment-listening-sessions-final-report.pdf.

Mike Andrews, Staff Director and Chief Counsel of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs provided an update on the work of the Committee. Giving a "shout out" to Tony Walters for the bi-partisan effort in the Committee. Andrews also said that,



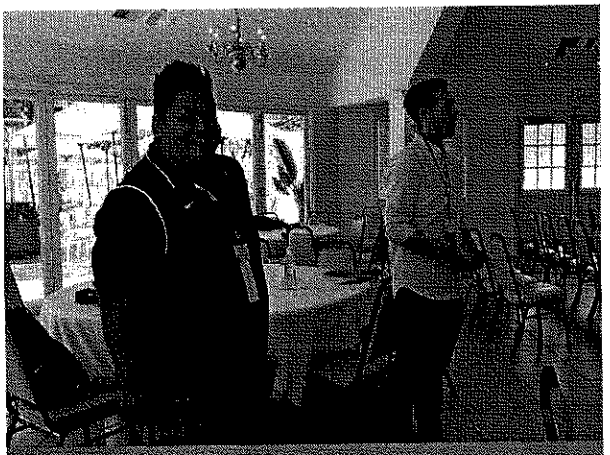
Mike Andrews, Staff Director & Cheif Council, Senate Committee on Indian Affairs

"Senator Barrasso and Senator Tester are determined and intact to advocate for Indian Country."

Andrews went on to speak about a number of pieces of legislation the Committee is currently focusing on including: The Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Amendments Act, the reauthorization of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA), the IRRIGATION Act, The Survive Act, and the Interior Improvement Act.

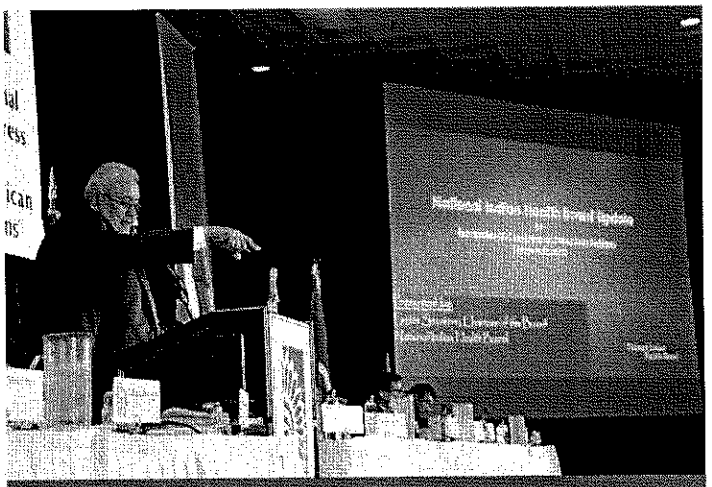
"We can't do it alone, your continued advocacy is vitally important and unified approach is the best strategy," said Andrews. "Please support those bills, and let us know of the bills you cannot get behind. We are here to do the work."

The afternoon NCAI Youth Commission gave way to an engaged discussion with two young tribal leaders: Lummi Nation Business Council Council Member Celina Phair and Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians Council Member Reid D. Milanovich. The youth asked hard questions about getting engaged with tribal council as a youth and the challenges that Phair and Milanovich have faced in their current positions.



Lummi Nation Business Council Council Member Celina Phair and Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians Council Member Reid D. Milanovich

Both Milonovich and Phair spoke about the importance education played in their lives and how it continues to give them the knowledge and strength to serve their communities.



Lester Secatero, Chairman, National Indian Health Board (NIHB)

The Sixth General Assembly began with a presentation by National Indian Health Board (NIHB) Chairman Lester Secatero. Based in Washington, DC, NIHB priorities and activities include the Employer Mandate, Appropriations, Tribal Behavior Health Agenda, and the Native Youth Summit. Secatero noted a number of challenges in Indian health care including the lack of access to the proper technology for doctors and the Employer Mandate putting a financial strain on Native communities.

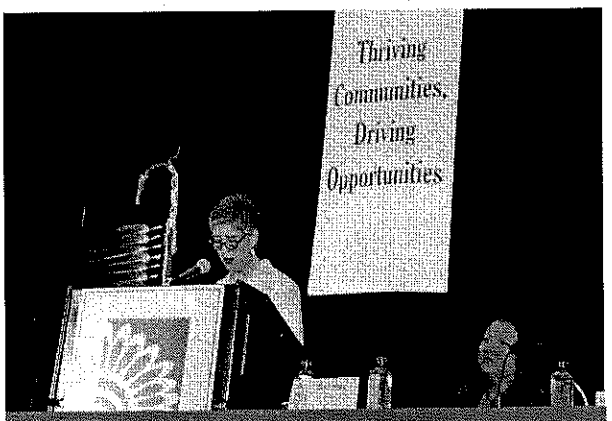
Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye addressed the body regarding the Gold King Mine Disaster and lack of response by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the White House. President Begaye explained that the spill greatly impacted Navajo farmers and their citizens' drinking water, forcing the Nation to haul water to those affected for two months. The Nation continues to see a lack of response from the federal government on these issues.

"Let's continue standing together and fight for our land, water rights, culture and keep fighting," said President Begaye. "We have yet to be given authority [over our] minerals and [are] asking NCAI to get behind the bills to the surface and minerals

beneath the land and ability to control those resources."

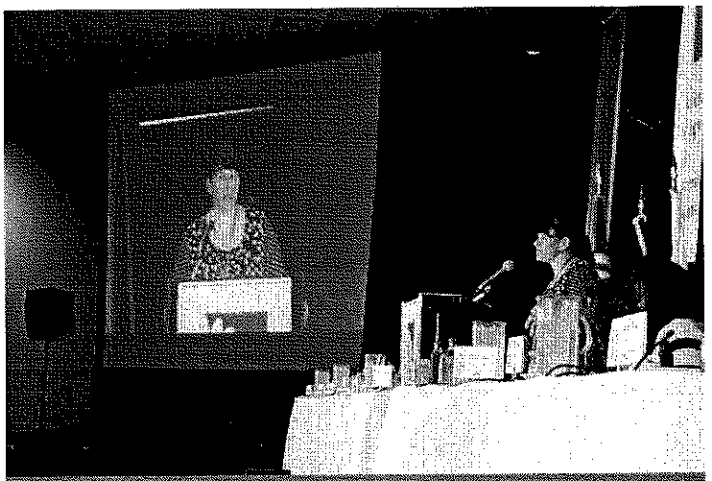
Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye and NCAI President Brian Caloodsby

Mary Bucci, Chief of 2020 Partnerships and Outreach at the U.S. Census Bureau, discussed the Census' upcoming tribal consultation on Friday and Saturday to review an operations plan, listen to the thoughts of tribal leaders about issues affecting their communities, and to increase collaboration between the Census Office and Indian Country.



Mary Bucci, Chief of the 2020 Partnerships and Outreach, U.S. Census Bureau

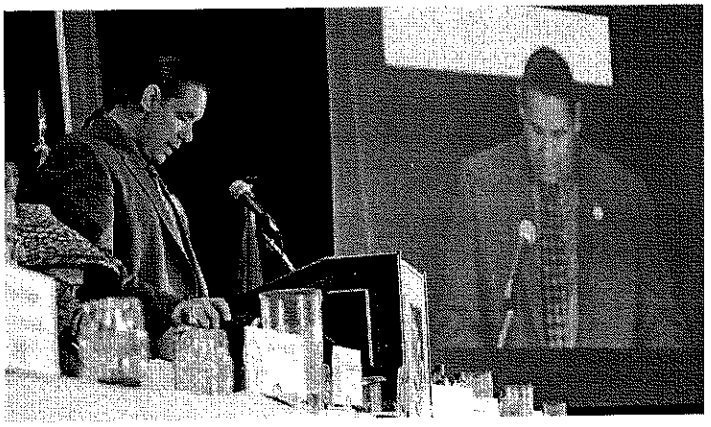
Marcia Hurd, Senior Counsel to the Director, Office of Tribal Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, spoke about Tribal Access to Criminal Databases. Hurd reported that tribes often face a number of barriers within state networks and that DOJ is working



Marcia Hurd, Senior Counsel to the Director, Office of Tribal Justice, U.S. Department of Justice

to fix the issue. Currently, DOJ has enacted a companion program, the Tribal Access Program (TAP), which any tribal social service agency can access by applying online at no cost. Visit http://www.justice.gov/tribal/tribal-access-program-tap for more information.

Jeff Grubbe, Chairman of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, spoke about the Band's Water Rights and current 9th Circuit litigation regarding their rights to ground water. Chairman Grubbe stressed the importance of water rights advocacy for tribes and the need for support in the appeal of the Band's 9th Circuit case to reclaim their ground water. He called for the body to join the Southern California Tribal Chairman's Association Amicus Brief.



Jeff Grubbe, Chairman, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

Assemblymember Luis Alejo from the California State Assembly joined Dhakota Brown, NCAI National Native Youth Cabinet for the Mascot Update. They spoke about California's historic decision to end the use of a racial slur in public schools as mascots.

UNITY Co-Presidents Brian Weeden and Sassamin Weeden

UNITY Male and Female Co-Presidents Brian Weeden and Sassamin Weeden lightened the room with the UNITY Update saying, "Go to UNITY it's like Disneyland!"

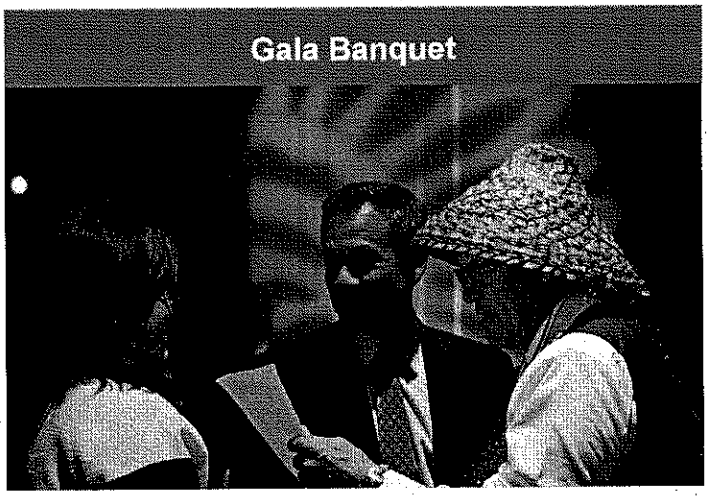
The Sixth General Assembly ended with "Free the Four". Presenters called for the exoneration of four men arrested in Alaska 18 years ago on murder charges. The NCAI body stood in solidarity for a photo at the end of the session.

Free the Four

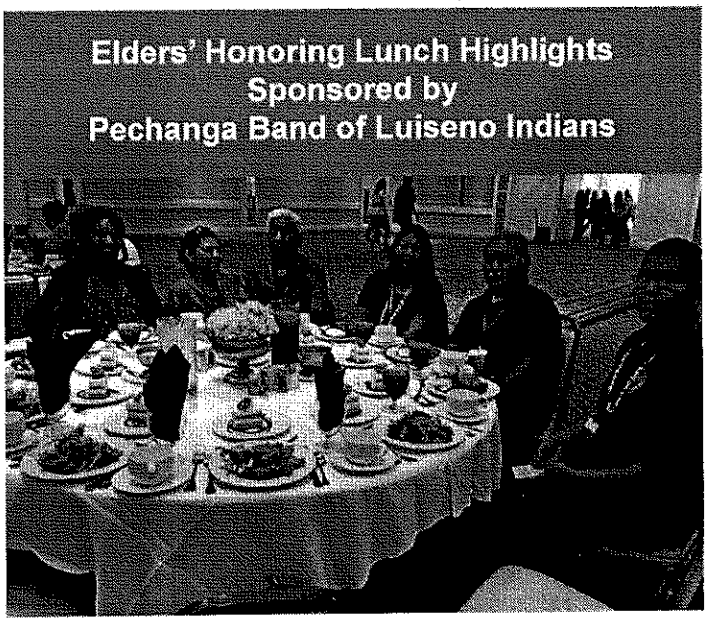
Thursday wrapped up with continued committee meetings and the annual Gala Banquet featuring a musical performance by Keith Secola, Award Winning Native American Musician.

The Gala Banquet attendees enjoyed dinner and an ad hoc round dance which ended in a sing along on the Gala stage.

NCAI would like to thank Bank of America for their generous sponsorship of the Gala Banquet, it would not have been possible with their support.



Gala Banquet



Elders' Honoring Lunch Highlights Sponsored by Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians

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National Congress of American Indians

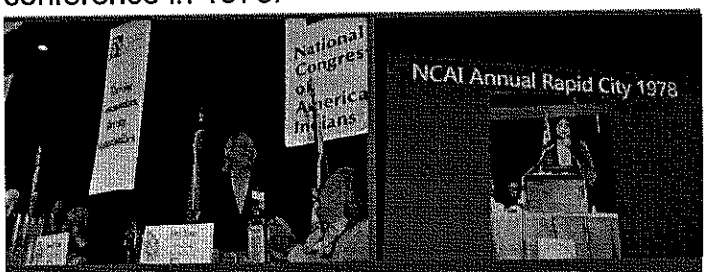
Daily Newsletter: Friday, October 23, 2015

On Friday, October 23, 2015, the NCAI 72nd Annual Convention & Marketplace came to a close. Prior to the last session, the foyer was buzzing with Indian arts and crafts vendors from across the nation. The Seventh General Assembly kicked off with the Treasurer's Report by outgoing NCAI Treasurer Arlan Melendez, followed by the Rules and Credentials Report, and the swearing in of the new NCAI Board Administrative Officers and Area Vice-Presidents.

Jackie Pata and Dahkota Brown join in the photo with the newly elected NCAI Board Administrative Officers, Area Vice-Presidents, and Alternates following their swearing in ceremony.

NCAI President Cladoosby led the assembly in the Resolutions Committee Report. Upon invitation to the podium from President Cladoosby, Committee Chairs from the Economic, Finance & Community Development, Human Resources, Land & Natural Resources, Litigation & Governance, and Veterans Committees presented the actions taken by their respective Committees and motioned for consideration and approval of their respective reports. The body approved all Committee reports. Taking a moment prior to the retirement of colors and closing prayers, President Cladoosby recognized a few special milestones.

Following the Litigation Report by John Echohawk, Executive Director of the Native American Rights Fund (NARF), President Cladoosby recognized Echohawk and thanked him for his and NARF's tireless commitment and work of asserting and defending the rights of Indian tribes and individuals. NARF is celebrating its 45th anniversary this November and Echohawk has been with the organization for its entire 45-year history, and has served as the executive director since 1977. Not to miss a golden opportunity, the NCAI staff found a photo of Echohawk presenting at an NCAI conference in 1978.



Then and now, Native American Rights Fund Executive Director John Echohawk reacts to NCAI Annual Rapid City 1978 photo.

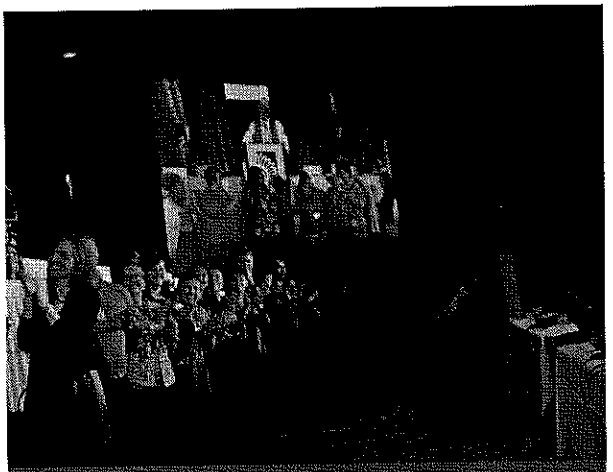
President Cladoosby also called Local Planning Committee Chair Rosemary Morillo, Chairwoman of the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians, to the stage to thank her for her work and to present her with a token of NCAI's appreciation.

A big thank you was also extended to the Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation for hosting such an amazing Welcome and Cultural Celebration at the beginning of the week. NCAI offered a special thank you to all of the Local Planning

Committee participants and California tribes for assisting with sponsorships and encouraging tribal leadership and members to register for the conference.

President Cladoosby went on to recognize all of the NCAI volunteers and Volunteer Coordinator Hedi Bogda (Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe) who came to NCAI for the week from Pauma Band of Luiseno Indians for coordinating all of the hardworking volunteers this week, including Tribal TANF and North Fork Rancheria.

He then acknowledged NCAI staff alumnus Jason McCarty for taking pictures all week and Cherokee Nation for letting NCAI borrow him for the event. For also lending a hand in communications, President Cladoosby thanked Ricki McCarroll, Nuna Consulting Group Founder & Principal Consultant, who put together the communications pieces during the conference.



President Cladoosby Recognizes NCAI Staff

President Cladoosby also recognized the NCAI staff for all of their hard work and anniversary milestones achieved with the organization: Deputy Director Robert Holden (30 years), General Counsel John Dossett (20 years), Office Manager Nketia Agyeman (20 years), Director of External Affairs Jamie Gomez (16 years), Director of Outreach Bernida Humetawa (13 years), Budget/Policy Analyst and PRC Program Manager Amber Ebarb (12 years), Legislative Associate Gwen Salt (10 years), Director of Conferences & Events Annarae Steele (7 years), Chief Financial Officer Sam Owl (6 years), Advisor to Partnership for Tribal Governance Sherry Salway Black Senior (6 years), Systems Administrator Chris Pata (5 years), Meetings & Events Coordinator Kellcee Baker (5 years).

Retiring of Colors, NCAI 72nd Annual Convention & Marketplace comes to close.

The Seventh General Assembly came to a close with a prayer and retiring of colors. The assembly moved for adjournment, which formally brought the NCAI 72nd Annual Convention & Marketplace to a close. Please stay tuned next week for a full conference recap. In the meantime, please visit https://www.flickr.com/photos/ncai/ to check out moments captured during the week.