



Native American Heritage Month

For All Employees

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Native American populations are made up of diverse tribes indigenous to North and South America. In the U.S., November is Native American Heritage Month, a time to celebrate the culture and accomplishments of Native American people and educate people about issues that affect their communities. We have provided this Meeting in a Box as a diversity training resource for you to use to spark conversations with your employees about Native American history and heritage. This document includes a historical timeline, a breakdown of the terms “Native American” and “American Indian,” an outline of facts and figures reflecting Native American populations and a section calling out and dispelling microaggressions and misconceptions about Native American people.

1 HISTORIC TIMELINE

We recommend you start your employees' cultural competence lesson on Native Americans by using this timeline, which lays out historical moments significant to Native American communities. Much of Native American history involves the hardships caused by colonization that still disenfranchise indigenous communities today. It is important to not just acknowledge this history but to also celebrate the successes Native American people have achieved and the important movements they have created.

Discussion Questions for Employees

- ? How accurate are your historic perceptions of American Indians? How has popular culture perpetuated stereotypes and misinformation? Discuss the dangers of stereotyping people and making assumptions in the workplace based on cultural misconceptions. Reference how stereotypes can force people to devalue their own contributions and bring less than their full selves to work each day.
- ? What civil rights of American Indians have been impacted? In what ways has their activism strengthened the civil rights movement? Discuss the historic implications of systemic inequities and discrimination on a group. When people within a demographic are not a large percentage of the population, how can they and their advocates fight for equity?
- ? What Native American barrier-breakers do you know of?



2 TERMINOLOGY: “AMERICAN INDIAN” VS. “NATIVE AMERICAN”

In the 1960s, many indigenous and non-indigenous people challenged the use of the word “Indian” to describe Native Americans for several reasons. First, it was a misnomer. The name came to be because Columbus believed he had landed in the West Indies when he reached the Caribbean. Therefore, many argued it was a term oppressors gave them. Another argument was that Indian was a pejorative because it had been used in the media (think: the “cowboys and Indians” trope) to simplify, romanticize and disparage indigenous people. However, as the term Native American became more widely accepted as the politically correct term, many people in the community objected to the term, saying it was a sterilized, generic, government-created term that did not acknowledge history. Many continue to identify as American Indians, because it is the only title for an ethnic group that places “American” before the name, acknowledging their true origins. Others also argue there is power in the incorrectness of the term Indian, because it does not erase or sterilize the oppression of European colonizers.

“We were enslaved as American Indians, we were colonized as American Indians, and we will gain our freedom as American Indians and then we can call ourselves anything we damn please,” Russell Means, a Lakota activist, wrote in his 1998 essay, “I Am An American Indian, Not a Native American!”

However, certain terms are unanimously considered derogatory by Indigenous communities (no matter what sports teams use them).

In the end, indigenous people identify themselves differently. Some prefer the term Native American and others prefer American Indian. Some use both terms interchangeably. People from tribes in Alaska often refer to themselves as Alaska Natives. The best way to refer to an indigenous person is by their tribe, if they know that information. Both Native American and American Indian are general terms, but different tribes have different cultures and customs. It is important to respect and honor the terms people use to identify themselves.



Discussion Questions for Employees

- ? How can there be power in a name?
How can some terms be used to oppress and be reclaimed to empower?
- ? How does our company allow people to self-identify?
How can we make sure we’re not checking general boxes to fill quotas, but rather acknowledge the true diversity of our employees?



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3 FACTS AND FIGURES

There are 573 federally recognized Native American tribes in the U.S. After discussing the diverse history of these tribes and how they choose to self-identify, the next step is to look at the available data regarding this demographic. Working hard to empower indigenous communities and granting indigenous individuals more visibility within companies has the potential to have profound effects on our society and in our economy.

Discussion Questions for Employees

- ? How does the history Native American societies have faced affect today's demographics? How do power and disadvantage play into these statistics? How can we acknowledge that our country's colonialist history may be painful for some and move forward in a way that empowers and celebrates Native American people?
- ? It is clear Native Americans are largely underrepresented in many areas associated with social and economic privilege. How does our company compare with others on the DiversityInc lists in terms of its inclusion of Native American employees? How can we improve?



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4 LEADER PROFILE: N. BIRD RUNNINGWATER

A DiversityIncBestPractices.com reader survey found that 68% of non-white people feel strongly about receiving career advice from individuals who look like them, while whites don't mind who the advice comes from. However, Native Americans still are underrepresented in all levels of companies.

Below is the story of N. Bird Runningwater, director of the Native American and Indigenous Program at Sundance Institute and a member of Comcast NBCUniversal's (No. 6 on DiversityInc's Top 50 Companies for Diversity list) external Joint Diversity Advisory Council (JDC). Comcast NBCUniversal formed the JDC in 2011 to seek advice from leaders across business, politics and civil rights who represent African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, women, people with disabilities, LGBTQ people and military communities. These experts on the JDC advise Comcast NBCUniversal's leadership on best for diversity and inclusion practices.

Runningwater has years of experience in advocating for indigenous representation and outreach in the media. Under his leadership Sundance has mentored and supported 140 indigenous filmmakers. In addition to serving on Comcast NBCUniversal's JDC, he also sits on the Board of Directors for the First Peoples Fund. In Time's 2019 Optimist Issue, he appeared on the list, "12 Leaders Who Are Shaping the Next Generation of Artists."

Runningwater is a member of the Cheyenne and Mescalero Apache tribes. He graduated from the University of Oklahoma with bachelors degrees in journalism and Native American studies and received a master of public affairs at the University of Texas at Austin.

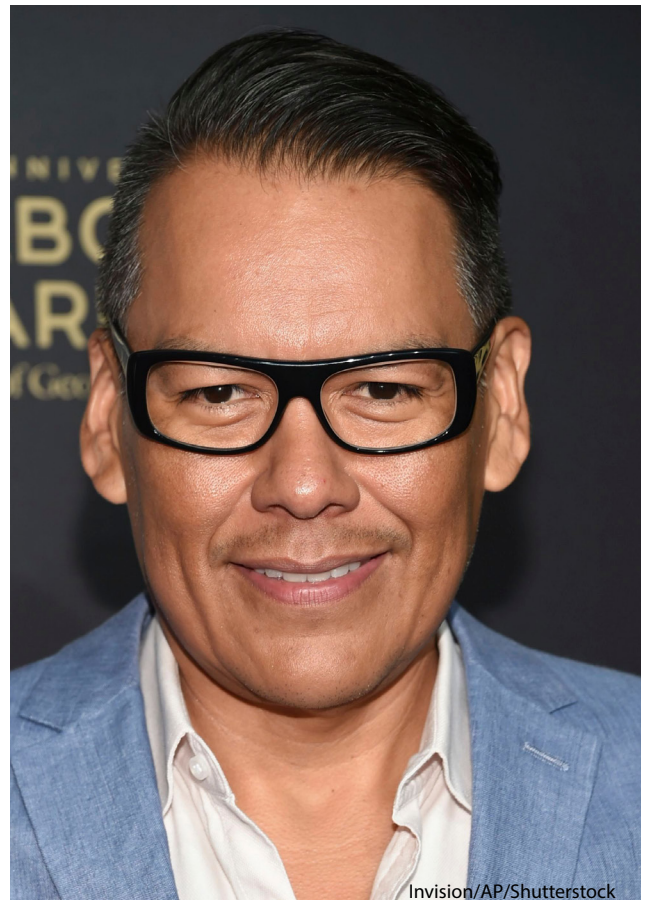
"It's been rewarding to support Comcast NBCUniversal's commitment to diversity & inclusion," Runningwater said in a statement to Comcast NBCUniversal on his membership in the JDC. "Not only do they welcome our perspectives, but they have also ensured we have a seat at the table."

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Discussion Questions for Employees

- ? How does our company help promote representation of Native Americans across the board in different areas of expertise?
Do we give them "a seat at the table?" In what ways can we improve?



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5 MICROAGGRESSIONS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

Microaggressions — subtle or seemingly lighthearted disparaging comments about someone's identity — may seem insignificant when isolated but compound to create a toxic environment for employees. This section serves to call out prejudiced and offensive comments people make and dispel harmful myths about Native American people. It is crucial to discuss how your workplace handles microaggressions and hate speech.



Discussion Questions for Employees

- ? How can we build an atmosphere of inclusion for diverse people from different backgrounds? What are some stereotypes we need to dispel? How can we speak out against them? Have you ever heard anyone making prejudiced comments in the office? What are our policies on microaggressions and hate speech in the workplace?
- ? What is the individual and the company's role in curbing microaggressions and hateful speech against indigenous people? At what point should the company become involved? Does the company have a process for reporting discriminatory speech and actions that makes the person reporting it feel safe and validated? How can we improve?



Timeline



1616



1763



1805



1812

1492 Christopher Columbus lands in the Caribbean. Believing he had reached the West Indies, he calls the people that inhabit the area "Indians." Columbus is responsible for the enslavement and oppression of native people and sparks an age of European conquest that brings disease and unrest to the "New World."

c. 1595 Pocahontas, daughter of Chief Powhatan, chief of a network of tribes in modern-day Virginia, is born.

1607 Pocahontas' brother kidnaps Captain John Smith of the Jamestown colony. Smith writes that after being nearly executed by Chief Powhatan, Pocahontas saves him. Though the story is romanticized in history books and Disney movies, historians debate the accuracy of Smith's account.

1613 Captain Samuel Argall takes Pocahontas as a prisoner in the first Anglo-Powhatan war. She is taught English, converted to Christianity and given the name "Rebecca." She marries tobacco planter John Rolfe a year later at age 17.

1616 Rolfe brings Pocahontas to London, where she is presented as a "civilized savage" in the effort of encouraging more investment in the Jamestown settlement. A year later, she dies in England of unknown causes at the age of 20 or 21.

1620 The Pilgrims first arrive in Plymouth. Many of the Native people in that area have been killed by a smallpox epidemic. Squanto, a member of the nearly-wiped out Wampanoag tribe, does help the settlers, but there is no recorded evidence any Natives were at the first Thanksgiving.

1680 Pueblo Native Americans in New Mexico revolt against Spanish.

1754 The French and Indian War begins as British settlers dispute with French

settlers over territory. Each side is supported by military units from their respective countries and Native American allies.

1756 The Seven Years' War between the British and French begins. Native Americans ally with the French.

1763 Ottawa Chief Pontiac leads Native American forces into the battle against the British in Detroit. The British attack the Ottawa warriors July 31 in the Battle of Bloody Run. The Native Americans fend the British off, but there are deaths on both sides.

1785 The Treaty of Hopewell is signed, in theory protecting Cherokee Nation Citizens under the jurisdiction of the young United States and sectioning off their land.

1791 The Treaty of Holston makes Cherokees give up their land outside of the borders already set for them.

1794 The U.S. wins the Battle of Timbers, usurping more Northwestern territory.

1800 Sacagawea, a Lemhi Shoshone girl, is kidnapped by the Hidatsa tribe. At 13, she is sold into a nonconsensual marriage with a French Canadian trapper, Toussaint Charbonneau.

1804 Sacagawea is six months pregnant when she meets Meriwether Lewis and William Clark as they explore territory in Louisiana. She becomes a valuable translator and mediator for the men.

1805 Sacagawea, carrying her newborn, accompanies Lewis and Clark on their expedition, helping them survive, navigate and speak to tribes in the area.

1812 The War of 1812 begins, with the U.S. fighting against the British, French and Native Americans over territory expansion.

- 1814** U.S. forces under Andrew Jackson attack Creek Indians who were against the expansion of American territory in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. The Creeks lose more than 20 million acres of land.
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- 1830** Jackson signs the Indian Removal Act, which evicts Native American tribes east of the Mississippi River and forces them to move to plots of land in the west. This removal policy later becomes known as the Trail of Tears because of the deaths that occurred during the forced migration.
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- 1836** The last citizens of the Creek tribe are forced from their land into Oklahoma. Of the 15,000 who leave, 3,500 die before making it to Oklahoma.
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- 1838** President Martin Van Buren enlists troops to hold Cherokees at gunpoint and march them off of their land. More than 5,000 Cherokee citizens die during the painful journey.
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- 1851** Congress passes the Indian Appropriations Act, which creates the Indian reservation system. It does not allow Native Americans to leave their reservations without permission.
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- 1864** Colorado volunteer forces massacre Cheyenne and Arapaho encampments, killing and mutilating more than 150 people. The event becomes known as the Sand Creek Massacre.
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- 1874** After a discovery of gold in South Dakota's Black Hills, U.S. troops ignore a treaty and invade the Native American territory.
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- 1876** The Battle of Little Bighorn — also known as Custer's Last Stand — takes place. Sioux and Cheyenne warriors, led by Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull, defeat Lt. Col. George Custer and his troops, which increases tensions between white Americans and Native Americans.
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- 1879** Carlisle Indian Industrial School opens in Pennsylvania. It forces Native American children to assimilate into white U.S. culture.
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- 1887** The Dawes Act gives the president authority to divide up land allotted to Native Americans in reservations.

- 1890** About 150 Native Americans are killed by U.S. forces during the Wounded Knee Massacre.
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- 1907** Charles Curtis, who is part Native American, becomes the first Native American U.S. Senator.
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- 1924** The Indian Citizenship Act grants citizenship to Native Americans born within U.S. borders. Before this act, Native American citizenship was limited.
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- 1929** Curtis becomes the first Native American vice president under President Herbert Hoover.
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- 1934** The Indian New Deal is introduced as an attempt to help Native Americans rediscover and revitalize their cultural heritage and traditions. Central to this deal is the Indian Reorganization Act, which sought to promote tribal self-governance. Though many tribes accepted it, many rejected it out of fear of more federal intervention.
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- 1941** About 25,000 Native Americans serve in World War II and 40,000 others work in wartime industries.
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- 1945** Thanks largely to the advocacy of Alaska Native Elizabeth Peratrovich of the Tlingit Nation, the Anti-Discrimination Act of 1945 is passed, which prohibits discrimination based on race in Alaska.
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- 1968** President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Indian Civil Rights Act, which grants Native American tribes rights included in the Bill of Rights.
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- 1970** President Richard Nixon gives his "Special Message on Indian Affairs" speech to denounce federal policies that oppressed Native Americans and advocated for their self-determination.
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- 1972** More than 500 Native American activists travel to Washington, D.C., to meet with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to establish ways to address treaty violations. Guards of the BIA building attempt to turn the activists away, but they begin a weeklong siege of the building. The BIA agrees to review the demands and transport the activists back home. The FBI declares these activists extremists.

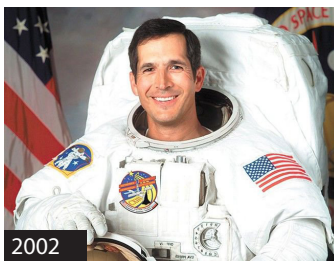




1988



2000



2002



2016

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| <p>1972 The Indian Education Act establishes funding for bilingual and bicultural education programs.</p> <hr/> <p>1975 Leaders from over 20 tribes create the Council of Energy Resource Tribes (CERT) to help indigenous communities secure better terms from corporations seeking to exploit resources on reservations.</p> <hr/> <p>1978 The Indian Child Welfare Act addresses the practice of transferring care and custody of Native American children to non-Natives. It recognizes the right of tribal courts to address issues of adoption and guardianship.</p> <hr/> <p>1980 In the <i>United States v. Sioux Nation of Indians</i>, the Supreme Court rules Sioux Indians are to be offered a total of about \$106 million for the taking of their land of the Black Hills in violation of the Treaty of Fort Laramie. The Sioux do not take the money and to this day, it sits in a trust fund collecting interest.</p> <hr/> <p>1981 The Lakota Times is first published. To this day, it is the only official legal South Dakota Native American newspaper on tribal land.</p> <hr/> <p>1988 The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) allows tribes to conduct gaming on their land, but makes it subject to tribal and state negotiations for certain types. The first Two Spirit Gathering, hosted by Minneapolis Native Americans takes place, honoring LGBTQ Native Americans celebrated as Two Spirits because they have both masculine and feminine traits. Richard LaFortune, a Native American LGBTQ activist, organizes this meeting.</p> <hr/> <p>1990 The Native American Languages Act makes it a U.S. policy to preserve and protect Native languages. The Indian Arts and Crafts Act (IACA) of 1990 promotes Native American artwork and small businesses. President George H.W. Bush designates November 1990 as National American Indian Heritage Month. The term Two Spirit becomes the appropriate label to encompass the spectrum of sexual and gender identities within Native American communities.</p> | <p>1992 The Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation open the Foxwoods Resort Casino in Connecticut, the largest resort casino in the U.S. The first Indigenous People's Day is celebrated in opposition to Columbus Day.</p> <hr/> <p>1994 The American Indian Religious Freedom Act has amendments added that allow American Indians to legally use the psychoactive plant peyote in religious ceremonies.</p> <hr/> <p>1996 President Bill Clinton authorizes a White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities to support and develop tribal colleges.</p> <hr/> <p>1999 Shannon County, South Dakota, home of Oglala Lakota Nat., is identified as the poorest in the country.</p> <hr/> <p>2000 The U.S. Mint issues a dollar coin depicting Sacagawea.</p> <hr/> <p>2002 John Bennett Herrington, a Chickasaw member, becomes the first Native American in space.</p> <hr/> <p>2008 The Coquille Indian Tribe in Oregon becomes the first to openly adopt marriage equality policies.</p> <hr/> <p>2009 The federal government meets a \$3.4 billion settlement with American Indians who say they were owed royalties.</p> <hr/> <p>2011 New York State begins to collect sales tax on tobacco products sold on American Indian reservations.</p> <hr/> <p>2012 Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act allows tribal governments to approve leasing of tribal lands.</p> <hr/> <p>2016 Native Americans from the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in North Dakota protest the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline, which is set to run through their sacred tribal land. In 2017, their motion in court is denied, but they are still fighting to try to halt construction.</p> |
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Facts & Figures

POPULATION, AS OF 2018

Number of American Indian/Alaska Native people of one race

2.8 million (0.9% of total population)

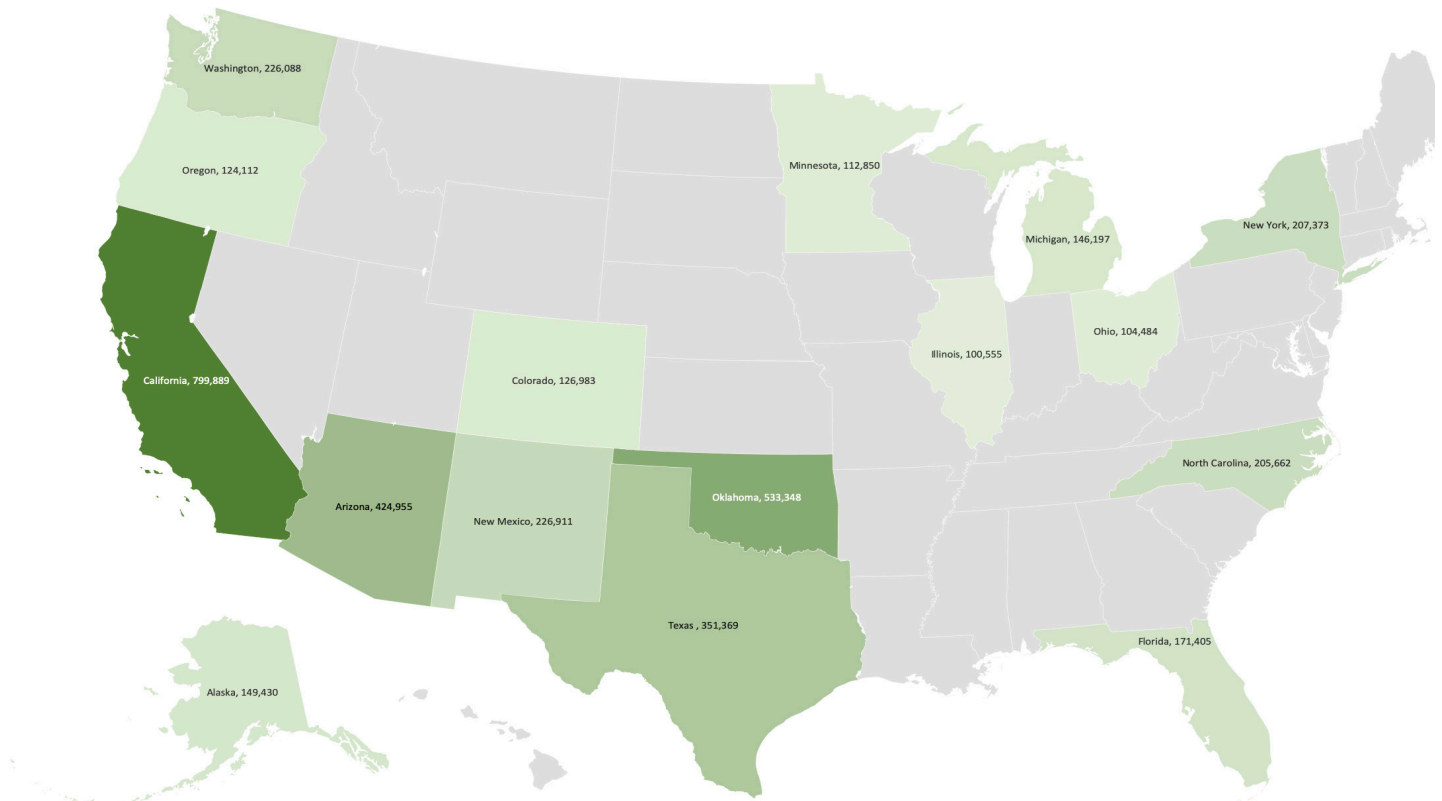
Number of American Indian/Alaska Native people 2+ races

5.7 million (1.7% of total population)

Most Populous Tribes (Including people of 2+ races)

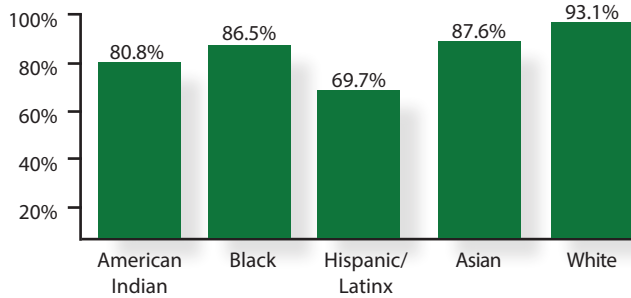
Cherokee	1,082,601
Navajo	402,606
Choctaw	264,356
Chippewa	217,693
Mexican American Indian	214,663
Sioux	203,393
Blackfeet	154,831
Apache	152,985
Iroquois	111,865

States With Highest Native American Populations (over 100,000)

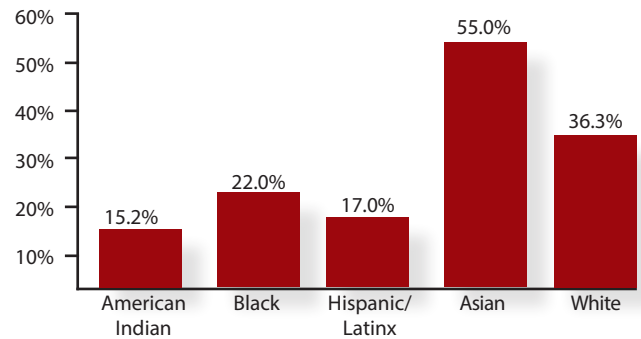


EDUCATION, AS OF 2018

Percentage of Population 25+ With at Least a High School Degree

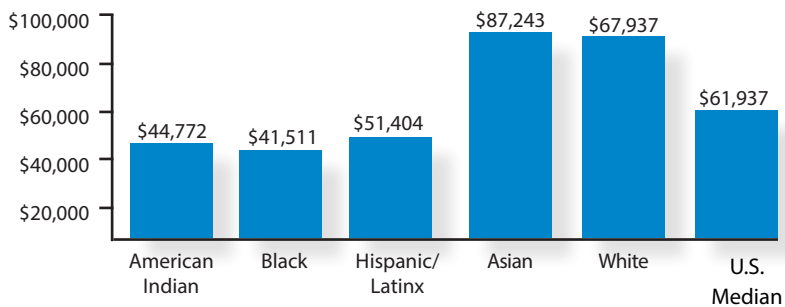


Percentage of Population 25+ With at Least a Bachelor's Degree



INCOME, AS OF 2018

Median Household Income



Percentage of DiversityInc Companies that Have Formal Sponsorship Programs Focused on High-Potential American Indian/Alaska Native Employees (Q 123 on survey)

2019 Top 10 + HoF	86.67%
2019 Top 50 + HoF	56.05%
2019 All Companies	39.38%

American Indian/Alaska Natives still are underrepresented in the workforce, especially in higher-level positions. They represent 0.35% of management personnel, according to the U.S. EEO Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. All companies in the 2019 DiversityInc survey reported that 0.38% of management new hires were American Indian/Alaska Native, and of their workforce, 0.46% are being mentored, 0.35% are being sponsored and 0.36% are among the highest paid in the company.

Misconceptions of and Microaggressions Toward Native Americans

Below are just a few examples of misconceptions about Indigenous communities, as well as common microaggressions many Indigenous people face — and information to disprove and denounce them.

MISCONCEPTION: American Indians do not have to pay taxes.

FACT CHECK: American Indians pay income tax, the same as any other Americans. This misconception likely comes from the fact that tribes — which operate as their own autonomous governments — are not taxable by the state or federal governments. The U.S. also does not levy taxes on federal payments used to compensate individuals for taking private or treaty land. Those who work within reservations do not pay taxes on their income, but those who work outside of them do. Because tribes are their own governments, they can tax people living on their reservations.

MISCONCEPTION: Native Americans are predisposed to alcoholism.

FACT CHECK: This way of thinking is inherently problematic. Ethnicity cannot predict substance abuse patterns. Do we say white people are genetically predisposed to opioid abuse?

MISCONCEPTION: Casinos make all American Indians rich.

FACT CHECK: Some blame Native Americans for being on welfare, while others claim they are rich from casinos. Like most stereotypes, neither are true. There are 459 gaming establishments in America on Indian land. Of the \$28 billion generated in 2014, 96 brought in between \$10-\$25 million. Eighty-eight saw less than \$3 million. Twenty-six made over \$250 million that year. Poverty rates of Native American communities are still high, regardless of this income.

MISCONCEPTION: The story of Thanksgiving proves the settlers and Native Americans had an amicable relationship.

FACT CHECK: Just like the story of Columbus, the story of Thanksgiving is complex. There is actually no recorded evidence that Indians were at the table. The pilgrims were not the first Europeans to reach the Americas. Squanto, a member of the Wampanog tribe, is remembered for helping the settlers through their first winter, but before that, he was captured and sold as a slave in England. He returned to find the majority of his tribe was killed by a smallpox epidemic before he met the Pilgrims.

MICROAGGRESSION: Saying something or someone is your “spirit animal”

Spirit Animals, Animal Guides and Spirit Helpers are all spiritual terms various Indigenous cultures use to describe benevolent spirits. The term describes something sacred and religious — It doesn't just mean you identify with or relate to something.

MICROAGGRESSION: Calling a meeting or get-together a “pow-wow”

Pow-wows are significant celebrations in many Indigenous communities that allow people in the tribe to feel a sense of community and to honor their heritage in a society that often marginalizes them. At these events, people dance, sing, socialize and celebrate their culture. An impromptu chat at the watercooler is not a “pow-wow.” Real pow-wows require significant planning.

MICROAGGRESSION: Calling someone an “Indian giver”

This figure of speech, which refers to someone giving someone a gift and then taking it away is derogatory — and not factual. Ironically, it was the U.S. government who redistributed stolen Native American land to them and then continued to usurp it in violation of treaties.

MICROAGGRESSION: Using the figure of speech, “low man on the totem pole”

Again, totem poles have religious and cultural significance to many tribes in the Northwest. These carvings portray stories of lineage, mythology and important events. Totem poles are symbols of prestige in a community. Often, the figure portrayed at the bottom is the most significant.