



# NICWA

**National Indian Child Welfare Association**

*Protecting our children • Preserving our culture*

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Portland-Based Organization, National Indian Child Welfare Association, Received \$300,000 Grant for Racial Healing Project as Part of W.K. Kellogg Foundation \$75 Million Effort to Tackle Structural Racism and Promote Racial Healing

#### *America Healing* Initiative Will Expand Opportunities for Vulnerable Children

**Portland, Ore.** – Against a backdrop of increasingly disproportionate rates of American Indian/Alaska Native children being removed from homes and being placed in government child welfare systems, the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) unveils a plan for both Native communities and non-Indians to acknowledge historic injustices and build reconciliation, in order to address structural racism and improve child welfare outcomes.

This grant to hold reconciliation forums and begin to improve services and outcomes for American Indian/Alaska Native children and families is one of 119 awarded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to support racial equity and healing. “Once a shared past is acknowledged, no matter how recent or how long ago the interactions may be, we believe reconciliation creates a foundation for a better future for our nation’s most vulnerable children,” said NICWA Executive Director Terry L. Cross, MSW, LCSW and member of the Seneca Nation.

In an unprecedented effort to address the devastating impact of racial inequities on communities across the country, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation today launched a five-year, \$75 million initiative —*America Healing*—that aims to improve life outcomes for vulnerable children and their families by promoting racial healing and eliminating barriers to opportunities.

NICWA intends to hold reconciliation forums at the state and national levels to examine harmful practices and disparity of child welfare services; share knowledge of superior child welfare practices for social workers in the field of care; and begin a broad social marketing campaign for a variety of stakeholders that addresses structural racism, raises awareness, and provides education on the reconciliation process and improving outcomes.

Children of color are over-represented among the 29 million low-income children and families in this country, particularly among families living in concentrated poverty. According to data from the National Center for Children in Poverty, about 61 percent of African American, 62 percent of Latino, 57 percent of Native American, 58 percent of children with immigrant parents, 30 percent of Asian American children, and 26 percent of white children live in low-income families.

The goal of the *America Healing* initiative is to help make that vision a reality by engaging communities and supporting them in the hard work of racial healing and addressing the effects of historic and contemporary structural issues, such as residential segregation and concentrated poverty.

#### **National Indian Child Welfare Association**

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**Terry L. Cross, Executive Director**

*(Seneca Nation)*

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During the first phase of *America Healing*, 119 organizations will receive grants totaling \$14,613,709 specifically to support community-based organizations' healing efforts among racial and ethnic groups that address historic burdens, disparities, and barriers to opportunity. Their efforts will focus within local communities to increase opportunities for children in education, health, and economic areas. Grantees represent 29 states and the District of Columbia and all racial and ethnic population groups. To highlight the desire of communities to work together on racial healing, the foundation created a signature video, capturing the spirit of the initiative. The video can be viewed at [www.AmericaHealing.org](http://www.AmericaHealing.org).

Moreover, the *America Healing* initiative complements the racial equity approach in all of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation grant-making directed at supporting vulnerable children, their families, and communities. The new initiative will continue to focus on issues at the core of structural racism and will align with the foundation's program areas: Education and Learning, Food, Health and Well-being, and Family Economic Security.

To learn more about *America Healing*, please visit <http://www.americahealing.org>.

**About the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA)**

NICWA is a national nonprofit and the most comprehensive source of information on American Indian child welfare and works on behalf of Indian children and families. NICWA provides public policy, research, advocacy, information, training, and community development services to a broad national audience, including state child welfare agencies and other organizations, agencies, and professionals interested in the field of Indian child welfare. Their website is [www.nicwa.org](http://www.nicwa.org), or you can call 503-222-4044 for more information.

**About the W.K. Kellogg Foundation**

Established in 1930, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation ([www.wkkf.org](http://www.wkkf.org)) supports children, families, and communities as they strengthen and create conditions that propel vulnerable children to achieve success as individuals and as contributors to the larger community and society. Grants are concentrated in the United States, southern Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. The foundation is based in Battle Creek, Mich.

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