

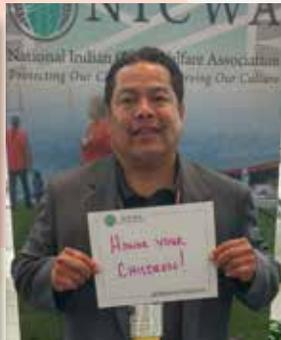


36th ANNUAL PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

National American Indian Conference on Child Abuse & Neglect

**Embracing Resilience and Gratitude through Indigenous Subsistence and Medicine
April 15–18, 2018 • Anchorage, Alaska**

2018 Conference Report



Thank You

Conference by the Numbers

- \$190,456** raised
- 3,296** cups of coffee
- 1,280** attendees
- 757** conference app users
- 739** new members
- 537** NICWA store items sold
- 320** tribes represented
- 144** presenters
- 65** workshops
- 58** volunteers
- 46** sponsors
- 46** states & provinces represented
- 39** exhibitors
- 32** youth cultural performers
- 2** grand prize raffles

Our 36th Annual Protecting Our Children National American Indian Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, held in Anchorage, Alaska, on April 15–18, 2018, was our most successful conference ever! With your support, we broke records. We are pleased to share our final report with our sponsors. The following are highlights of activities and outcomes over our four-day training event.

Membership Meeting and Reception

Every year, we kick off our conference with a membership meeting and reception which is underwritten by our Sacred Circle sponsors. The evening includes 200+ members, a report from our board of directors, awards ceremony, and cultural performances from our host region. The highlight of our membership report was the roll out of NICWA's five-year strategic plan presented by our Executive Director, Dr. Sarah Kastelic. To learn more about this plan, please visit our website at www.nicwa.org. We were pleased to honor the New Mexico Tribal Indian Children Welfare Consortium as our 2018 Member Program of the Year for their collaboration and systems change work across their region. Additionally, NICWA awarded our annual member merit-based \$500 Wisdom Circle Scholarship to Casie Cultee (Lummi Nation), who works as a healing lineage coordinator in her community, to support her continuing education. The evening's two cultural groups were enjoyed by all: the Ldakát Naax Satí Yátx'i (All Nation's Children), a children's dance and Native language retention group from Juneau, Alaska, whose core belief is that the knowledge of Native culture will promote self-esteem, pride, and leadership in our young people and the Native Youth Olympics demonstration team who wowed the audience with their amazing athletic achievements of traditional Alaska Native sporting events.

Conference Workshops and Panels

Throughout this four-day conference, NICWA hosted 65 workshops on subjects inspired by our theme "Embracing Resilience and Gratitude through Indigenous Subsistence and Medicine." This year marked a turning point in our call for presenters. We were thrilled to receive a spike in proposed workshop submissions. As a result, we were able to provide cutting-edge training for our conference attendees to advance their skills and increased opportunities to network with Native child welfare advocates from across the nation doing innovative, culturally-based, and life changing work. This programming was particularly important and moving for those attending from isolated and/or rural communities. Popular workshops included Youth, Family, and Community Engagement Through Experiential Education, Working with Substance-Abusing Families, and The Winter Bear and the Power of Story. The first day of conference began with a plenary panel on the Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact. Thanks to the expertise of the participants, attendees learned about



Executive Director, Sarah Kastelic, and Keynote Speaker and Banquet Dinner Emcee, Ariel Tweto



Attendees pledge to support NICWA's mission with donations during banquet dinner paddle raise



Byron Nicholai performs in his Native language, Yup'ik, for conference attendees

Your support made this year's conference possible!

the work to make this one of its kind tribal-state compact happen. Attendees were inspired by the "get to yes" mindset, where all parties involved in this work were committed to making the compact a reality in order to better serve Native children. Another panel that drew a lot of attention was our Stewarding Intergenerational Transfer of Knowledge, which included both elders and youth on one panel, a departure from our youth-only panel from the last five years. Speakers shared about stewarding strong relationships across generations, ancestral knowledge, and intergenerational healing.

Banquet Dinner Celebration

Thanks to our host sponsor, Seminole Tribe of Florida, the banquet dinner was a moment of celebration where all conference registrants were invited to dine together on the third and final night of the conference. The evening's program began by welcoming Carla Cooper to the stage to accept the Champion for Native Children Award posthumously on behalf of her mother, Linda Logan (Oklahoma Choctaw), former NICWA board member. A life-long Native child advocate, Linda had been standing up for Native children since the 1970s and always spoke about how thankful she was to be doing this work. We were grateful to share stories about her and continue protecting children in her honor. Emcee Ariel Tweto (Inupiaq), television personality and founder of nonprofit Popping Bubbles, effervescently led the night's activities, including the Grand Prize Raffle drawings of a Surface Pro and all-inclusive trip to Hawaii, sponsored by our Four Direction supporters. NICWA was humbled by the outpouring of support during the paddle raise portion of the evening where NICWA invited, in the tradition with special significance and connection to Native peoples in the Northwest, financial support of our work. All who gave were gifted with a cedar paddle. The banquet dinner ended with an inspiring musical performance by Byron Nicholai (Yup'ik), a youth performer and composer from Toksook Bay. He is the creator of the Facebook page I Sing, You Dance and has traveled in and out of Alaska to perform his music and spread Yup'ik songs. Ultimately, the evening was an unforgettable celebration with friends and colleagues.

NICWA Gratefully Thanks Our New and Returning Conference Sponsors!

We appreciate your partnership in strengthening the well-being of American Indian and Alaska Native children and their families by increasing the knowledge, skill set, and resources of people who seek to improve the lives of and outcomes for Native children and youth. We hope you will mark your calendars for next year's conference taking place on March 31–April 3, 2019 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

What our attendees are saying...

"Through this beautiful conference it was further instilled into my work how important it is to acknowledge healing, invite in our spirits to help us, and to remember to listen intently to our elders."

"The knowledge gained from this conference will benefit all my future educational and career endeavors. This reinforces my career choice of social service work."

"I learned to approach the Native community in a manner that is respectful and open... [and] to use the natural strengths of this community and to work with them."

"I felt the atmosphere at this conference was very comforting. I felt like there was much healing that took place and very important information gained."



Member Program of the Year 2018,
New Mexico Indian Child Welfare Consortium



Carla Cooper, daughter of 2018 Champion for
Native Children, Linda Logan, accepts
award in her honor, posthumously



Founder and Senior Advisor, Terry Cross,
with Host Sponsor Seminole Tribe of
Florida representatives

Thank you to our generous sponsors!

Host



Four Directions



Sacred Circle



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