

2024
NICWA
ANNUAL
REPORT



NICWA

National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture



UNITED ...
BY CULTURE
GUIDED
BY COMMUNITY



ABOUT NICWA



OUR MISSION

NICWA is dedicated to the well-being of American Indian and Alaska Native children and families.

OUR VISION

Every Native child must have access to community-based, culturally appropriate services that help them grow up safe, healthy, and spiritually strong—free from abuse, neglect, sexual exploitation, and the damaging effects of substance abuse.



WELCOME



Dear NICWA Members, Donors, and Friends,

I am pleased to share with you NICWA's fiscal year 2024 annual report, *United by Culture, Guided by Community*. This past year, we continued our collective work to protect the well-being of Native children and families, guided by the enduring strength of our cultures and the natural safety net of our communities.

Throughout the year, we saw firsthand how the power of unity and shared values can drive positive change for future generations. With the Supreme Court's historic 7-2 decision upholding the constitutionality of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) in *Haaland v. Brackeen*, we started off this fiscal year with collective celebration. We ramped up our advocacy to strengthen ICWA implementation and tribal child welfare systems in partnership with tribal nations. We've been thinking about the long-term and asking the question, "What can be done this year or this moment?"

As you read through this report, you will see how our growing membership spans far and wide, representing Native child welfare advocates from across the United States and Canada, united in their commitment to protecting our children. We have significantly expanded our resources for relative caregivers and tribal child welfare programs, including the release of the updated *Positive Indian Parenting* (4th edition), a parenting curriculum based in traditional, cultural practices and a vital tool for ensuring children grow up safe with strong families. This year, we also hosted 11 tribal leader listening sessions, helping us shape our priorities for the years ahead.

With gratitude for your partnership,

Sarah J. Kastelic

Sarah Kastelic, PhD, MSW
Alutiiq



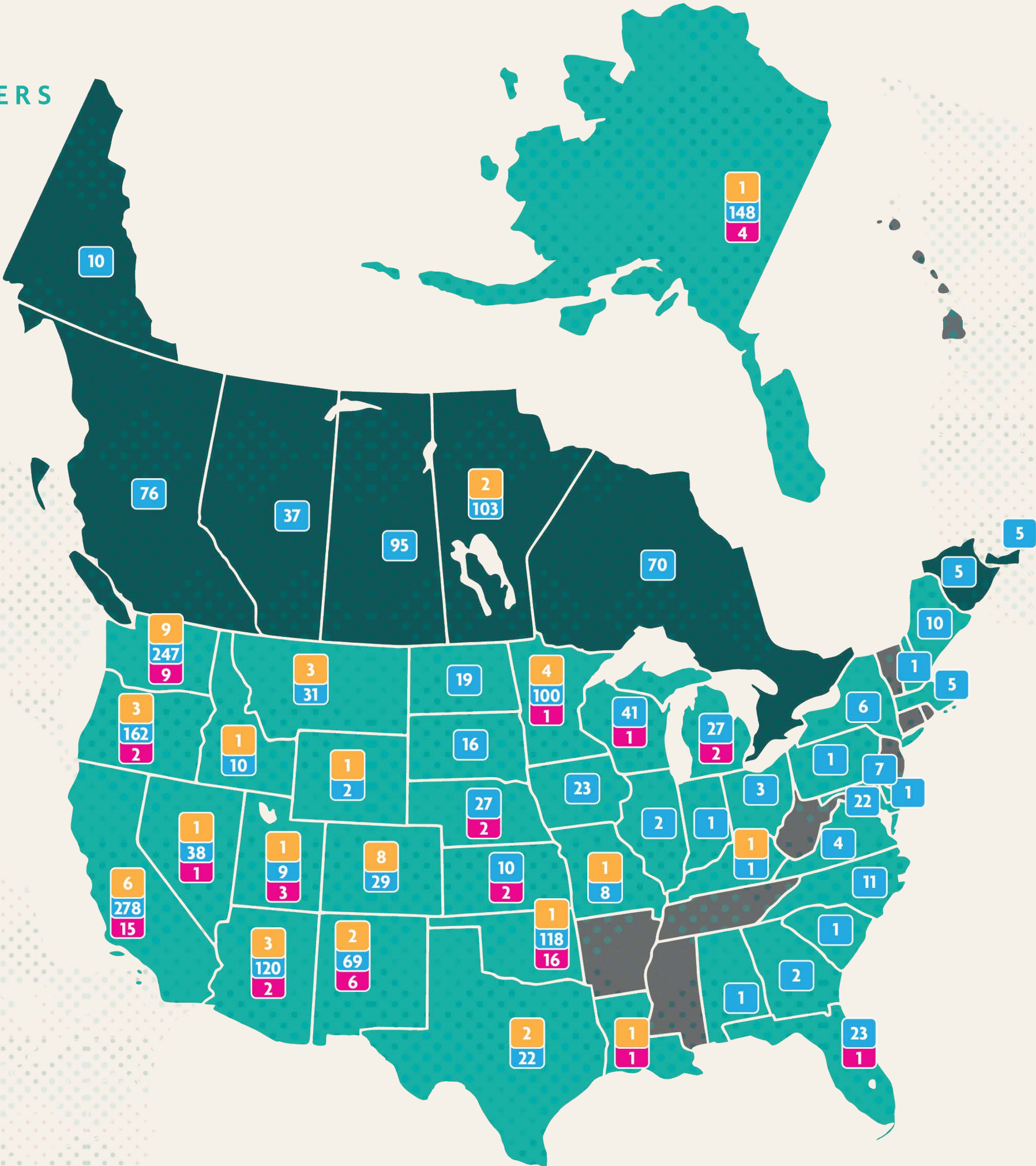
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Sarah Kastelic
PhD, MSW, Alutiiq

“
With the Supreme Court's historic 7-2 decision upholding the constitutionality of the Indian Child Welfare Act in *Haaland v. Brackeen*, we started off this fiscal year with collective celebration.”

NICWA MEMBERS

“
I am a member
so I can advocate
and keep our
Native children in
Native homes.”

“
By participating
in NICWA's work,
I've learned to
share my story
to help people
understand the
importance of
the Indian Child
Welfare Act.”



Become a Member

View NICWA Members

There are NICWA members in
41 states 8 Canadian provinces
for a total of
124 tribal and organizations members
2,163 individual members
2,260 total NICWA members

“
I've always
associated
NICWA with
the annual
conference,
it's a great
opportunity for
reconnecting
and meeting new
people.”

2024 FISCAL YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

HIGHLIGHTS

- Grandfamilies Guidance: Considerations for Tribal Child Welfare Programs
- The largest Annual Protecting Our Children Conference yet
- Supreme Court upholds the constitutionality of ICWA
- *Positive Indian Parenting* 4th Edition
- Regional and national tribal leader ICWA advocacy listening sessions
- Kinship Services in Tribal Child Welfare Policy Toolkit
- How Relative Caregivers Can Advocate for Relative Native Children in State Child Welfare Agency Custody
- ICWA Compliance Summary and Review of Existing Literature

KEY NUMBERS

Public Policy:



11
Congressional bills informed



4
NICWA sets of testimony for appropriations bills



5
NICWA sets of testimony for congressional hearings and briefings



6
NICWA comments for administrative regulations

Trainings:



325
people trained at Training Institutes



7
virtual and in-person Training Institutes



381 people trained through online courses, Introduction to ICWA and Working with Substance-Abusing Families



901 NICWA curriculum sold with one curriculum release, the 4th Edition of *Positive Indian Parenting*



1,077 people trained at community trainings

42ND ANNUAL PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN CONFERENCE

The theme of NICWA's 42nd Annual Protecting Our Children Conference, Together We Stand: Preserving the Spirit of ICWA, focused on the unified efforts to protect the Indian Child Welfare Act and its vital role in safeguarding Native children and families.

In Seattle, service providers, community members, and advocates gathered for four days of learning, networking, and celebration to advance NICWA's mission of strengthening the well-being of Native children and families. Attendees explored tribal best practices, state-tribal partnerships, and strategies

to strengthen tribal child welfare systems, ensuring that ICWA remains a cornerstone for the well-being of tribal communities. Keynotes featured innovative leaders, Native youth, and coalition members who defended ICWA through the Protect ICWA Campaign.

Hear about conference from attendees:

“What I most enjoyed was the connections that I made. In between sessions, I found myself immersed in deep conversations with individuals from various tribes which increased my understanding of the unique needs of each tribe and community. This was my first time attending a NICWA conference and something that stood out was the sense of family that I got among everyone that I connected with. I wasn't at all prepared for such a warm welcome throughout the different conversations I had. One of my favorite sessions was with Sandy White Hawk because she took an improvisational approach to her session which brought a ton of life into the space. I hope that I am able to attend this conference again in the future to build upon the connections that I made here.”

“This conference inspired me and motivated me to become a better worker for the children and families I serve. I was losing my spark and questioning my purpose in this field, but I came home wanting to make change.”

“I learned so much not only about approaching ICWA better as a legal practitioner, but also how to do it more mindfully as an ally (I'm not Native American).”

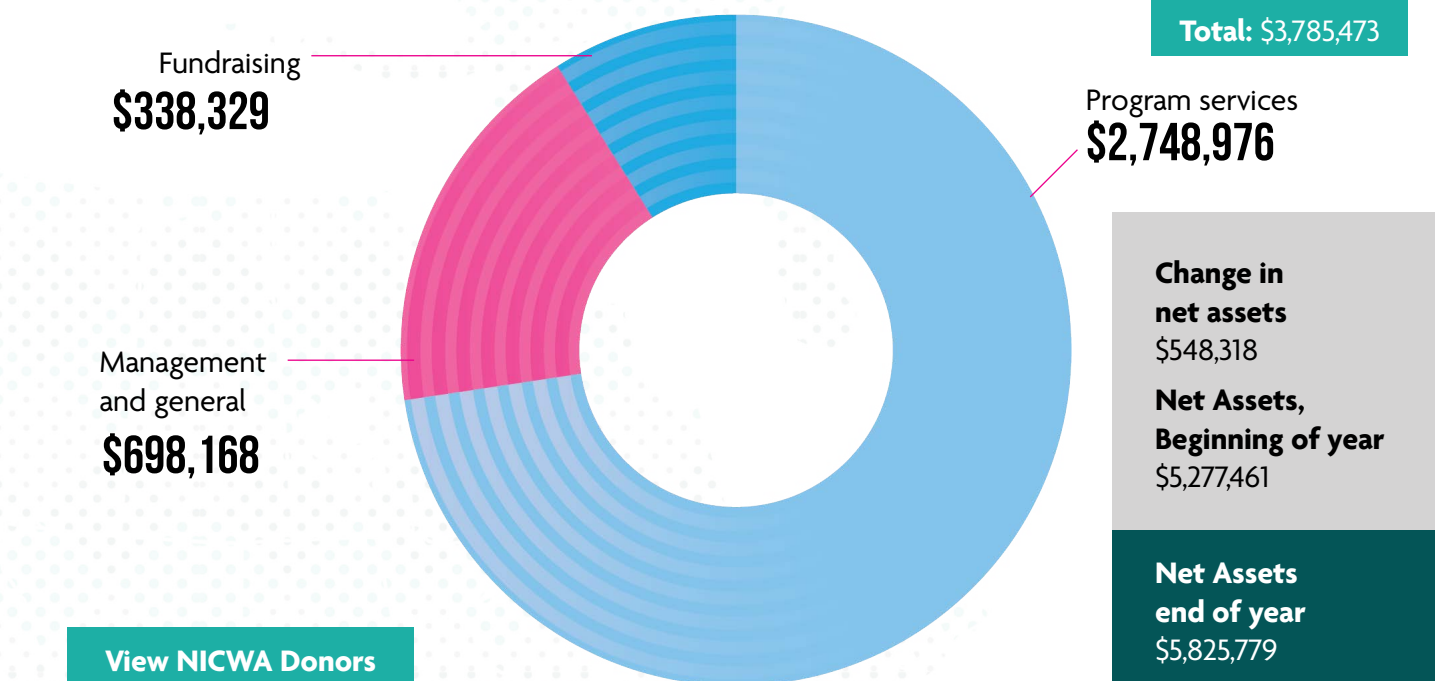
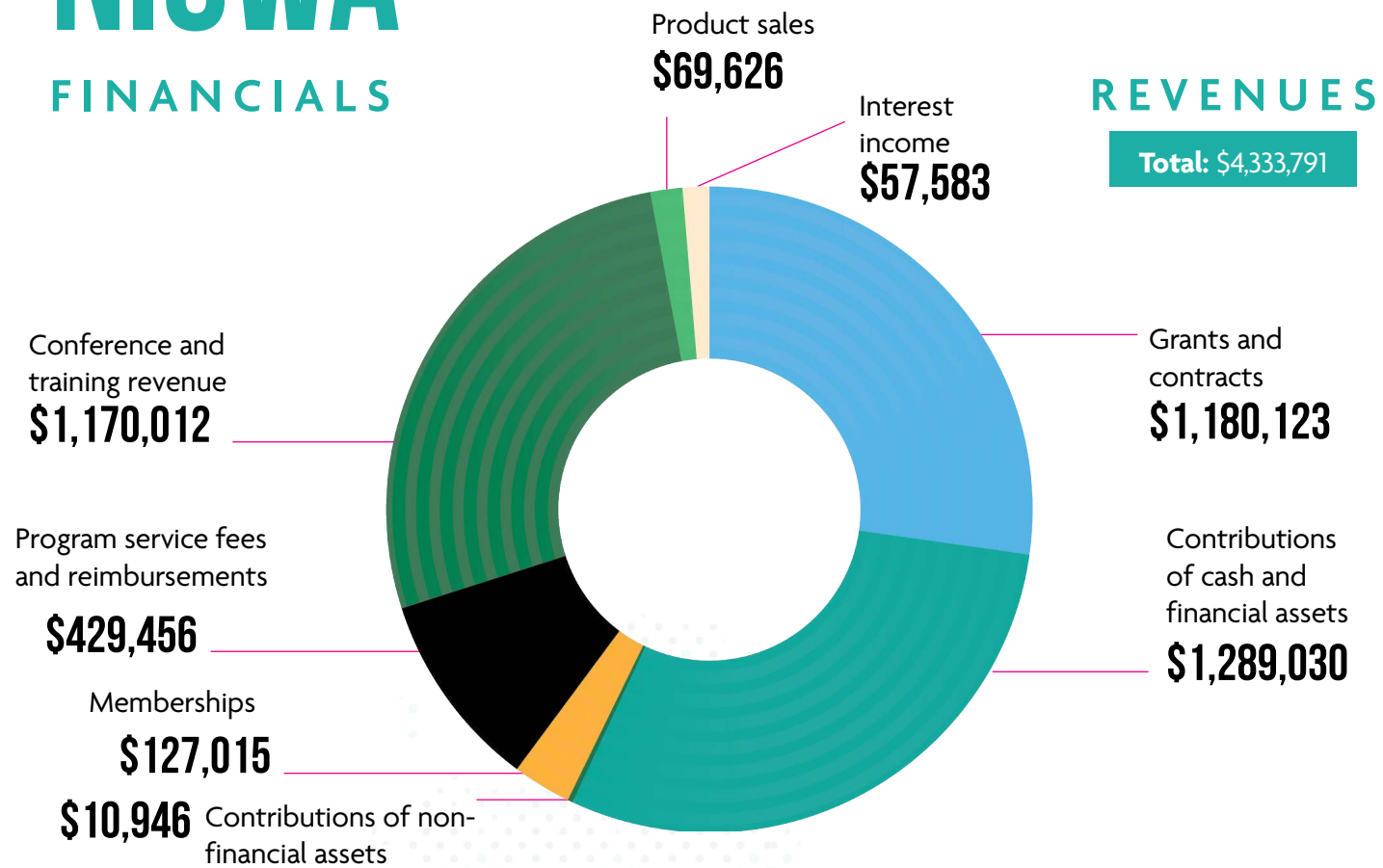


CONFERENCE BY THE NUMBERS:



NICWA

FINANCIALS



NICWA

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*As of the end of the 2024 fiscal year, 4/30/2024

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