



Sovereign Nations

TribalSelfGov.org

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Celebrating 30 Years of Self-Governance in Action



Over the past three decades, Self-Governance Communication and Education Tribal Consortium (SGCETC) has blazed the trail, wrote the rule book (quite literally), changed the functional relationship between governments, and still – it continues to gain speed.

In celebration of this monumental year, Sovereign Nations wanted to feature Self-Governance itself, highlighting the exhaustive work from the early years through today and mapping the potential future of the next 30 years as tribal governments continue to flourish and grow.

“Self-Governance leaders knew that Tribes needed to take matters into their own hands, to develop a true government-to-government partnership in order to implement programs that best meets our community needs,” said SGCETC Board Chairman and Jamestown S’Klallam Tribal Council Chairman/CEO W. Ron Allen. “The bottom line is, we know our people, their needs, and we know we can provide more effective services that are under our control.”

Just 12 years since the passage of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA), tribal governments had reached the end of their patience with bureaucratic oversight. In 1987, a group of tribal leaders banded together to advocate for the humble beginnings of what would become the first Self-Governance Program. They needed a program that would be flexible for large and small tribes, large land-based tribes, and every scenario in between. Tribes initiated Congressional advocacy and selected the Department of the Interior (DOI) as the first agency to compact and transfer responsibilities to tribal governments.

After a successful congressional campaign, seven tribes brought a unified voice and participated in the negotiations during the inaugural year of the program in 1988, including: Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, Lummi Nation, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Quinault Indian Nation, Cherokee Nation, Absentee Shawnee Tribe, and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Since then, those tribes developed an Office of Self-Governance within the DOI, developed regulations, and worked with tribes across the country to support their Self-Governance efforts. In fact, over the last 30 years, the number of tribes grew exponentially to 276 tribes, including five new tribes in 2018 alone.

“Exceptional progress has been made over the last 30 years, but much work still remains in supporting tribal efforts towards strengthening their self-governance strategies,” said Sharee Freeman, Director of the Office of Self Governance. “I am committed to the mission of helping tribes find ways to enhance their financial systems to manage public budgets more effectively and safeguard their financial sectors in areas that support governmental operations. Ideally, my hope is to offer more technical assistance at

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Then & Now

1988
21
Self-Governance Tribes
7 DOI | 14 IHS

2018
636
Self-Governance Tribes
276 DOI | 360 IHS

30x
There are 30x more
Self-Governance Tribes
in 2018 than 1988

Celebrating 30 Years of Self-Governance in Action Continued...

no charge to tribes in matters regarding revenue and policy, budget and finance, government debt and infrastructure, economic crime team management, banking and financial services."

Indian Health Service (IHS) had the advantage of observation. Looking at the process established by its fellow agency, IHS approached its initial negotiations with a learned ear as it developed the IHS Office of Tribal Self-Governance (OTSG) which negotiated agreements with 14 total tribes in its first year including Sac and Fox Nation, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, Cherokee Nation, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Absentee Shawnee Tribe, Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, Ely Shoshone Tribe, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon, Lummi Nation, Makah Tribe, and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation.

Since that time, the OTSG has overseen the implementation of the IHS Tribal Self-Governance Demonstration Program in 1994, development of a permanent IHS Tribal Self-Governance Program as authorized by Title V of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) in 2000 and promulgation of the Title regulations in 2002.

Today, OTSG provides information, technical assistance and policy coordination in support of IHS Self-Governance activities, with maximum input from IHS staff and workgroups, Tribes and Tribal Organizations, and the Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee (TSGAC) – a standing committee of 20 years alongside the DOI Self-Governance Advisory Committee (SGAC).

Since its inception, OTSG has entered into 97 Compacts and 124 Funding Agreements transferring \$2.0 billion to Tribes and Tribal organizations in all 12 IHS Areas, with over 360 federally recognized tribes are associated with these agreements, and six tribes joining the OTSG family just in 2018.

"I value the wisdom and vision of Tribal leaders that forged the path for Tribes and Tribal organizations to exercise Self-Determination and Self-Governance to meet their health care goals and objectives," said IHS Deputy Director for Intergovernmental Affairs P. Benjamin Smith. "I look forward to being a part of the Self-Governance legacy in working with future Tribal leaders as they continue on this path towards healthy future generations of American Indians and Alaska Natives."

When the current leadership of the OSTG and OSG were asked to identify core attributes of Self-Governance tribes, the resounding answer was leadership. Leadership in decision making, financial management, and finding solutions in an ever-evolving environment.

In the last three years, Self-Governance Tribal leaders have dedicated their time to continued innovation in the Self-Governance Program, including growing the program into other agencies

such as the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), amending and providing updated provisions to ISDEAA, and utilizing their knowledge to affect change tribal communities across the country.

Driven by tribes, the Self-Governance Program works to not only uplift tribes themselves, but also surrounding communities, making the impact of Self-Governance Program greater than the founding 21 tribes originally imagined.

Tribal governments are providing resources that spur economic development in and around tribal communities. An expression of sovereignty itself, tribes are innovating health care by building facilities accessible for their people and the surrounding cities and counties – in many cases the only health care facility in a rural area. Tribes are building roads, providing cross-deputization and law enforcement solutions to jurisdictional challenges at the local level, and developing commercial businesses that provide jobs.

"Each Tribe's experience and journey is and will be unique. We have grown and learned together through this collective experience. From 14 to over 360 Tribes that participate in IHS Tribal Self-Governance Program – this is amazing. As the OTSG Director, I look forward and I am honored to serve as an advocate and partner with Self-Governance Tribes," said Acting OSTG Director Jennifer Cooper.

The success stories are endless, many of which have been captured in the pages of Sovereign Nations in recent years. As one self-governance advocate pointed out – in the history of the Self-Governance Program, not one tribe has ever ceded services back to the federal government. In that statement alone proves the Self-Governance Program works! And we're just getting started.

"Over the last thirty years, tribal administrative infrastructure has improved, carrying with it a great sense of pride because tribes have found ways to retain traditions while utilizing modern techniques to exercise sovereignty. We have seen successful economic growth in Indian Country when tribes make decisions and are able to implement plans for their communities. This great work is inspiring generations to become business, community and government leaders," said Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs John Tahsuda. "The Department of the Interior is a proud partner in this mission and continues to support Self Governance."

The future is bright for the Self-Governance Program, with history to guide us, dedication and innovation to drive us, and leadership to show us the way, the next 30 years is just on the horizon.

Congratulations to the Self-Governance Communication and Education Tribal Consortium Tribal leaders, advocates, partners, and friends on this moment. Thank you for being warriors for sovereignty and creating the opportunities realized by Self-Governance.

Happy Anniversary.

Indian Health Service Community Health Aide Program Tribal Advisory Group

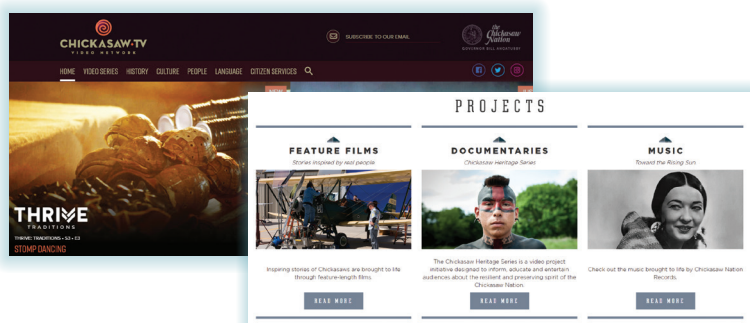
On [June 1, 2016](#), the Indian Health Service (IHS) issued a Tribal Leader letter initiating Tribal Consultation on the Indian Health Service draft policy statement on creating a national IHS Community Health Aide Program (CHAP). The result of the consultations was summarized in a letter to [Tribal Leaders issued on January 4, 2017](#) showing wide-range support for the new program across the country.

According to the letter, the IHS is creating an IHS [Tribal Advisory Group](#) (TAG), “as part of our ongoing work to assure a high performing Indian health system, the CHAP TAG will focus on addressing the next steps, which will include providing subject matter expertise, program information, innovative solutions, and advice to the IHS to establish the national CHAP.”

The IHS Area Directors solicited nominations for one primary and one alternate for each IHS Area to serve on the CHAP TAG and also adopted the recommendation from the IHS Direct Service Tribes and Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committees to utilize their Tribal Chairs on the CHAP TAG. The CHAP TAG convened for a two-day, in-person meeting of the CHAP TAG on March 21 and 22, 2018 in Phoenix, AZ.

For more information about the IHS CHAP TAG contact Minette C. Galindo, Public Health Advisor, Office of Clinical and Preventive Services, IHS, by telephone at (301) 443-6680 or by e-mail at Minette.Galindo@ihs.gov. To access the full archive of the IHS Tribal Leader letters visit <https://www.ihs.gov/newsroom/triballeaderletters/>.

Traditional Storytelling in the 21st Century



It is no secret that over the last 250 years, tribes and Native communities in the United States have been forced to move, change, and adapt in a way that is unimaginable.

That adaptability combined with the strength of ancestors and communities banding together helped to build the 573 federally recognized nations that we celebrate today.

From that strength and initiative came programs like Tribal Self-Governance. From that initiative came the reclamation and development of language and culture programs across the country. Built on these principles, tribes like the Chickasaw Nation looked to create a movement through their tribal government to tell the story of their people.

Investing in technology, adapting, and propelling their vision into the 21st century, the Chickasaw Nation saw an opportunity to reach audiences across the world, promote economic development for their people, and to stop the perpetuation of stereotypes and inaccurate history.

Chickasaw Nation Productions (CNP) was established to tell the story of the Chickasaw people through the lens of film production to help support the mission of the Nation: To enhance the overall quality of life of the Chickasaw people.

Through the vision of Chickasaw Nation Governor Bill Anoatubby, an internal video production practice was turned into a full film

production initiative whose works are available via Chickasawfilms.com and the Chickasaw.TV – most recently available on Apple TV and Google Chromecast.

“Film production is part of our effort to tell the story of the Chickasaw people,” said Governor Anoatubby. “We became involved in making movies because film is a great way to tell our own stories and illustrate the important role Chickasaw people have played in American history. We believe it is vital to tell the stories of the Chickasaw people and the role the Chickasaw Nation has played in history from our own perspective, because we believe it adds important context to the historical narrative.”

To date, CNP has produced and completed three full-length documentaries and two feature films, with a third feature film called “The Chickasaw Rancher” currently in post-production. Drawing acting talent from its own database of Chickasaw actors, CNP to looks fill roles through accurate casting and telling stories through the lens of the Chickasaw Nation.

Embracing the industry potential, CNP established a presence in the greater Oklahoma film industry, contributing to its positive impact on the Oklahoma economy. Working closely with the Oklahoma Film and Music Office, the Nation helps to showcase the natural beauty and diversity of the state, and assisting filmmakers and tourists alike experience the variety of landscapes Oklahoma has to offer.

In addition, CNP is committed to supporting the Native film industry by providing education, training, and employment opportunities specifically for Chickasaws and other Native Americans by supporting the wide variety of careers beyond actors, including electricians, engineers, makeup artists, and more.

Through self-determination, and self-governance, the Chickasaw Nation turned its lens outward utilizing a tradition of storytelling to reach an audience across the world. To learn more about Chickasaw Nation Productions, Chickasaw Films, and Chickasaw.TV visit the links below:

<http://www.chickasawfilms.com/> and <https://www.chickasaw.tv/>



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Bridging the Gap in Community Health Care Community Health Representatives (CHR) Program

It is older than Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) and the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), it shares an anniversary year with the Indian Civil Rights Act (ICRA), and is arguably one of the first steps towards the Self-Governance Program that we know today.

Established in 1968 under the 1921 Snyder Act, the Community Health Representatives (CHR) Program has provided 40 years of service to American Indian and Alaska Native communities since its inception.

According to the IHS, the CHR program is the largest tribally contracted and compacted program being directly operated by tribes under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) at a rate of more than 95 percent in all 12 IHS Areas with over 1,600 CHRs representing 250 tribes.

Meaning over two-thirds of the current 360 IHS Self-Governance tribes and tribal organizations currently compacted with the IHS have a CHR program.

Providing health care at the most local level possible, CHRs are first responders, patient advocates, public health educators, community liaisons, care takers, communicators, and much, much more.

CHR's are grounded in their communities with many being tribal members or citizens of the communities they serve enabling better quality of care, culturally appropriate solutions and education on specific issues impacting their community.

However, CHR's might be facing large cuts to the Program in the upcoming FY2019 budget.

"Among one of the biggest concerns of the Washoe Tribal Health Center is the elimination of funding for our Community Health Representatives (CHR) and Health Education Programs (HEP) in the FY2019 budget. The Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup recommended a total of \$92M for the CHR program overall," said Washoe Tribal Health Center Executive Director Angie Wilson. "This particular program was the tenth highest budget priority by tribes across the nation, and certainly a significant concern for the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, as our tribal communities span across two States and four counties. These services are paramount in our tribal communities."

Seminole Nation of Oklahoma CHR Director Jerome Harrison echoed the sentiment of Ms. Wilson, stating, "when you enjoy what you're doing, it's hard to watch it go away."

Harrison and his team work across their community in Oklahoma and focus on the leading health needs of the Seminole Nation which include high rates of Type II diabetes and cardiovascular health. They also provide

education in hygiene, alcohol and substance abuse, as well as host an annual Heart Walk that brings the entire community out to participate and talk about health needs.

In Arizona, the CHR program takes on a different shape at the Navajo Nation as CHR's are extensively trained as first responders and are often the first people on the scene in an emergency medical situation or natural disaster.

"During a large snow storm on the reservation, no machines were working, roads were blocked, but an elder had ran out of medication," said Navajo Nation CHR Director Mae-Gilene Begay. "Our CHR saddled up her horse and rode to the elder's house in the snow to deliver the medication, that is how dedicated our CHR's are to our patients."

In 2016, the Navajo Nation CHR Program was also able to make an impact in reducing suicide ideation by 1 percent.

"Once a CHR, always a CHR," said Pamela Aguilar, a 19-year CHR veteran and current CHR Consultant.

"We work with our community members and connect them to the resources they otherwise would not have," said Aguilar. "Whether they are uncomfortable seeking out resources, have a language or education level barrier, we looked to remove those barriers with the main goal to bridge that gap."

The CHR Program is proving effective across the country in every community it serves. Time and time again CHR's are proving that this is more than a program, but a family of care givers, educators, and trusted community members who are able to find the best solutions for the people they serve in working side-by-side. Contact SGCE at (918) 302-0252 for more information about the CHR Program.



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