



**AIANTA**  
American Indian Alaska Native  
Tourism Association

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Cultural Tourism Development Opportunities to be Introduced at BIA Tribal Providers Conference**

*American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association presents for first time at annual conference*

**Anchorage, Alaska (November 21, 2017)** – Next week, Native representatives from across Alaska will flock to Anchorage for the 2017 Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Tribal Providers Conference, where the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) will host special cultural tourism educational workshops – the first time tourism will be presented as a focus of this convention.

The BIA Tribal Providers Conference will take place November 28-30 at the Dena'ina Center in Anchorage, and is expecting more than 1,700 tribal representatives in attendance.

“It’s imperative to bring tourism into the discussion at an event like this,” said Camille Ferguson, AIANTA Executive Director. “We want to educate Alaska Natives on the economic opportunities cultural tourism can present and all of the opportunities that AIANTA has to offer to tribes involved in tourism around the state.”

As part of the Workforce Development Sessions Ferguson, along with one of AIANTA’s Alaska Regional Board Representatives Rachel Moreno and AIANTA Website Development Coordinator Sandra Anderson will educate attendees on the vast opportunities cultural tourism offers as well as AIANTA’s main initiatives to promote and enhance Indian Country tourism throughout the world. These initiatives include marketing opportunities on AIANTA’s consumer facing website, NativeAmerica.travel, training opportunities at AIANTA’s annual American Indian Tourism Conference, tourism focused educational opportunities and webinars throughout the year and international outreach around the world.

AIANTA and NativeAmerica.travel will be providing technical assistance and training as a focus during the one-on-one sessions at the 2017 BIA Tribal Providers Conference. NativeAmerica.travel, produced and developed by AIANTA in partnership with the BIA, is the only destination website dedicated to Native American tourism. The premier website connects travelers to the many unique American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian destinations in the United States. As the leading travel resource for visitors seeking travel experiences in Indian Country, AIANTA is excited to bring the economic potential of the site to the tribes in Alaska, while offering on-site training to join the website at no cost to the tribes.

AIANTA is encouraging attendees to sign up early for the limited one-on-one sessions on the BIA Tribal Providers Conference website, or at <https://freebusy.io/sandra.anderson@nativeamerica.travel/30min>.

Also a topic of discussion at the cultural tourism sessions will be the Native American Tourism & Improving Visitor Experience (NATIVE) Act, which was signed into law in 2016 to enhance and integrate Native American tourism, empower native communities, increase coordination and collaboration between Federal tourism assets, and expand heritage and cultural tourism opportunities in the United States.



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This year marks the 27th BIA Providers Conference, which offers training, technical assistance, information sharing and dynamic interaction with peers, professionals, subject matter experts and government officials.

## **About AIANTA:**

The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) is a 501(c)(3) national nonprofit association of Native American tribes and tribal businesses that was incorporated in 2002 to advance Indian Country tourism. The association is made up of member tribes from six regions: Alaska, Eastern, Midwest, Pacific, Plains and the Southwest. AIANTA's mission is to define, introduce, grow and sustain American Indian and Alaska Native tourism that honors traditions and values.

To learn more, please visit [www.aianta.org](http://www.aianta.org). For current updates, like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on Twitter ([@OfficialAIANTA](#)).

## **About the BIA Providers Conference:**

The mission of the Alaska Region Bureau of Indian Affairs is to serve the 229 Federally-Recognized Tribes in Alaska, which constitute more than forty percent of all tribes in the country. The vast land area of Alaska Region and the large number of tribes make the annual Providers Conference an efficient and economical forum for serving tribes in this unique and challenging environment. The theme for BIA27 is "Embracing Change", a highly appropriate sentiment as the nation progresses forward in new and exciting dimensions which are certain to have far reaching effects and outcomes for Alaska Natives. For more information about the annual conference, visit <http://biaprovidersconference.org/>.

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