



AIANTA

American Indian Alaska Native
Tourism Association

2015-2016

ANNUAL

REPORT



Native artist demonstration at the Grand Canyon Desert View Watchtower, 2015

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Partners and Friends,



2016 has been an amazing year for the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (Aianta) and for Indian Country tourism, and the highlights of our many achievements make up this year's annual report. The report emphasizes what we have accomplished, so I'd like to emphasize the who, the people and the teamwork that have made our success possible. Aianta's staff, consultants, and volunteer Board of Directors work hard and bring a passionate professionalism to our mission. This core group is lifted up in their work by our collaborators: our partners, funders and members.

This large, remarkable team performed the work and provided the insight, knowledge and energy that produced our biggest headlines this year:

Aianta Launches NativeAmerica.travel: First and Only Website Dedicated to Indian Country Tourism

Aianta Sees 19% Increase in Overseas Visitation to Indian Country between 2014-2015

Aianta Wins President's "E" Award for Export Service

Aianta and The George Washington University Launched Certificate Course in Tribal Cultural Tourism

Aianta Facilitates Re-Dedication of Grand Canyon Desert View Watchtower to Tribal Cultural Heritage

Aianta Publishes Guide with Unique Tribal Perspective on Historic Route 66

Congress Designs Legislation to Increase Federal Inclusion of Tribes in Tourism

These achievements and more are described inside. A historical timeline of Aianta's work is also included; it's always useful to look back to where it all began and note how far we've come.

But we hope your main takeaway is that this year's progress—digital innovations, national and international recognition, and significant growth in organizational capacity—makes it possible to offer our members an ever brighter future. With more and more visitors looking for an authentic, educational experience in their travels, there has never been a better time for tribes to tell their stories and share their living cultures through tourism. We believe that Aianta and the tribes it represents are at a momentous point of historic opportunity.

Cultural tourism can provide social and economic sustainability to the most remote rural communities and mainstream city neighborhoods, and the quest to develop capacity, become a destination, manage impacts and maintain authenticity are now more than ever achievable goals.

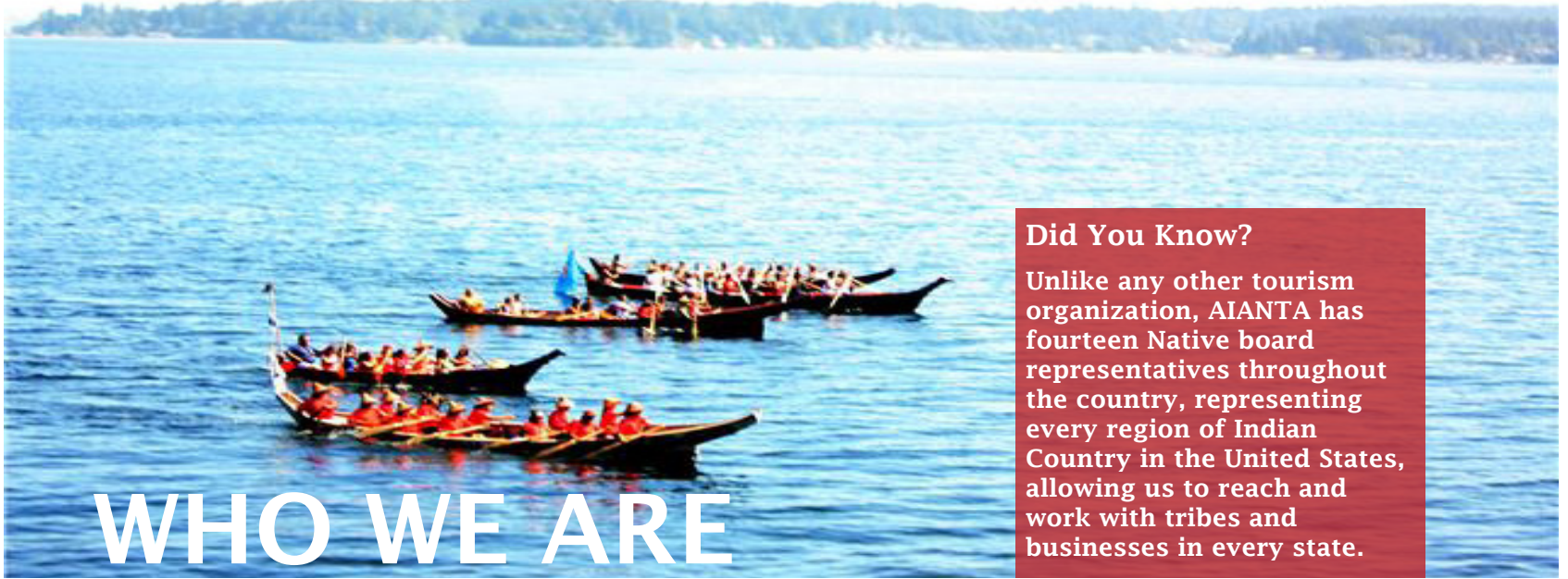
Aianta will proudly continue to work with tribes from across the country—and with federal agencies and tourism leaders—to support cultural tourism development through training and technical assistance, regional involvement, partnership building, amplifying important needs and issues and employing new technologies.

Your support of Aianta is deeply appreciated. We will continue to count on your generous commitment, as together we create a future that inspires social and economic progress in Indian Country in the coming year and beyond.

Gunalchéech- Thank you

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Camille Ferguson".

Camille Ferguson,
Aianta Executive Director



WHO WE ARE

Did You Know?

Unlike any other tourism organization, AIANTA has fourteen Native board representatives throughout the country, representing every region of Indian Country in the United States, allowing us to reach and work with tribes and businesses in every state.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to define, introduce, grow and sustain American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian tourism that honors traditions and values.

OUR WORK

AIANTA works on behalf of all 567 federally recognized tribes to support and promote cultural tourism in Indian Country. We are the only organization specifically dedicated to advancing Indian Country tourism across the United States, providing a national voice and local resources for tribes and tribal organizations to build capacity and achieve their tourism goals. We provide technical assistance, training and other resources to tribes to support tourism development and work hard to ensure tribal tourism is represented in national planning and decision-making.

OUR TEAM

The dynamic teamwork of AIANTA's staff, Board of Directors, funders, partners, consultants and members are the most significant driver in pursuing and realizing our mission. We support the tourism industry in Indian Country at all levels and embrace the idea that bold development and growth can stem from seemingly small and sometimes unexpected steps forward.

Our organization has added capacity in the past year, and our staff and consultants have experience working in Indian Country travel and tourism as well as expertise in economic and program development, rural planning and marketing. Members of our Board have vast and varied expertise, and many serve on national advisory boards, state cabinets and commissions that all work to strengthen Indian Country tourism. Our immense collective knowledge informs our work and shapes our actions nationally and internationally.



OUR IMPACT:

A look back

1999

First Annual American Indian Tourism Conference is hosted in Albuquerque, NM

2002

AIANTA becomes incorporated

2007

AIANTA begins international outreach efforts, attending ITB Berlin, the world's leading travel tradeshow, for the first time; visitation to Indian Country is estimated at 693,000*

2009

AIANTA obtains 501(c) 3 status

2014

AIANTA President Sherry L. Rupert brings Indian Country tourism to the forefront of congressional discussions, testifying before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs in a hearing on economic development

2013

American Indians and the Civil War, a collaborative publication of AIANTA and the National Park Service, is released

AIANTA President Sherry L. Rupert is appointed to National Travel and Tourism Advisory Board

2012

AIANTA and tribal inclusion are written into the National Tourism Strategy

AIANTA begins scholarship program to help Native students enter the tourism industry

AIANTA and the Bureau of Indian Affairs Department of Transportation sign a cooperative agreement to provide tourism technical assistance and training to tribes

AIANTA expands international outreach efforts with participation in IPW, the largest international travel tradeshow held in the U.S., for the first time

Our Industry: Tourism's National Impact*

77.5 million international tourists visited the United States generating a \$61 billion travel trade surplus

Travel and tourism exports support 1.1 million U.S. jobs with total employee compensation for this sector exceeding \$220 billion annually

Tourism is America's number one service export comprising 31% of all service exports in 2014

Tourism is a growing industry - increasing by 31% from 2010-2014

From 2014 to 2015, American Indian communities saw a 19% increase in overseas visitors - from 1,652,000 to 1,958,000, as a result of AIANTA's continued participation in the international market

2015 → 2016

AIANTA expands international outreach efforts into Italy, participating for the first time at Showcase USA-Italy

AIANTA creates a Public Lands Partnerships Program to work with federal agencies to build capacity for tribal tourism on and near federal lands

AIANTA's ongoing and expanded international outreach program pays off with significant increases in international tourism to Indian Country; **overseas visitors rise to an all-time high of 1,958,000***

Transforming Desert View - a collaborative project to repurpose a historic, scenic section of the Grand Canyon National Park into an area for tribal cultural interpretation - makes enormous progress when AIANTA secures an ArtPlace America grant for the project

AIANTA launches the first and only destinations website dedicated to Indian Country, **NativeAmerica.travel**



**Statistics provided by U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration, National Travel & Tourism Office*

AIANTA, in partnership with the National Park Service Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program, publishes the *American Indians and Route 66 Guidebook*, a fresh look from a tribal perspective at an iconic American highway, garnering millions of media impressions

AIANTA has attracted more than 30 official partnerships with federal agencies, national and regional tribal and tourism organizations and distinguished academic institutions

AIANTA accepts a high national honor for its international work, **receiving the President's "E" Award for Export Services**



AIANTA is awarded the Market Cooperator Development Program (MCDP) grant from the Department of Commerce International Trade Administration

AIANTA receives the Director's Partnership Award, recognizing the outstanding achievement's carried out by National Park partners nationwide

AIANTA, in partnership with George Washington University, launches Cultural Tourism Certificate Program



OUR VOICE

AIANTA provides a strong voice for tribes within the tourism industry. We work to tell the world—travelers, tour operators, travel agents, media, industry professionals and elected officials—about the unique stories that Indian Country offers through tourism. Through social media, expansive media outreach, e-newsletters, NativeAmerica.travel, and a strong presence at tradeshow, we expand the voice of tribes across the nation to reach the world.

AIANTA outreach achievements in the past year include:

Reached people from 50 countries via social media and website traffic

Created more than 70 million earned media impressions through more than 165 media stories

Attracted more than 10,710 website visitors

Placed 20 paid Indian Country tourism advertisements

Sent more than 80 email news blasts with a reach of nearly 4,000 targeted contacts per blast

Attracted 3,865 Facebook likes and 845 Twitter followers

Distributed quarterly newsletters reaching 16,000 readers

Participated in 18 speaking engagements globally

70 Million+

*earned media
impressions*

165+

*stories in the
news*

16,000+

*newsletter
readers*



AIANTA Southwest Board Representative Emerson Vallo speaks on rural tourism in Peru



AIANTA President Sherry L. Rupert speaks at the 2016 STS Congressional Summit on Travel & Tourism



AIANTA Executive Director Camille Ferguson speaks at NTA's National Travel Exchange



OUR POLICY PRIORITIES

In the fall of 2016, the passage of the Native American Tourism Improving Visitor Experience (NATIVE) Act is on the horizon.

The NATIVE Act, which was conceived by Senator Brian Schatz of Hawaii and his General Counsel Lenna Aoki, is designed to spur economic development and create jobs by enhancing and integrating Native American tourism, increase coordination and collaboration between federal tourism assets, expand heritage and cultural tourism opportunities in our nation, promote unique visitor experiences for domestic travelers and international visitors, and create tourism infrastructure needed to sustain Native tourism.

The bipartisan bill passed the Senate unanimously in April, 2016, and passed unanimously out of the House Natural Resources Committee to the floor of the House in July. The bill will be taken up on the floor of the House after the Congressional summer recess and is expected to pass and go to the President for his signature.

Rep. Markwayne Mullin of Oklahoma sponsored the NATIVE Act in the House. Both the Senate and House bills attracted 11 bipartisan co-sponsors.

AIANTA has enthusiastically supported the NATIVE Act. Our Legislative Committee has worked to provide tourism-related information and build appreciation in Congress for AIANTA's work and for tribal tourism's national, regional and local benefits. Through this outreach, AIANTA has strengthened its relationships with members and staff of Senate and House Committees with tribal and tourism authorities. AIANTA will continue to monitor and support Congressional efforts to strengthen American Indian tourism, economic development and transportation in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

"We've worked with AIANTA for 8 years, and are thrilled with the support and achievements carried out so far. STS is dedicated to promoting and developing tourism in the Southeast United States, and cultural and tribal inclusion is crucial to the all-around success of our represented states' tourism. We are happy to work with their great team of professionals to raise awareness, build partnerships, and bring tourism issues to the forefront through our work together during the annual Congressional Summit on Travel and Tourism in Washington, DC."

- Bill Hardman, President, Southeast Tourism Society (STS)

BUILDING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: AIANTA'S PUBLIC LANDS PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

Establishing Models for Tribal Inclusion Nationwide

One of AIANTA's constant goals is to help Indian Country link its historical interpretations to landscape, showcasing that authentic tribal stories and perspectives are intertwined in the fabric of American history.

AIANTA's Public Lands Partnerships Program (PLPP) works to achieve that goal, identifying public lands tourism-related projects on or near native lands and building alliances and working partnerships with public lands agencies to bring Native voices to those projects.

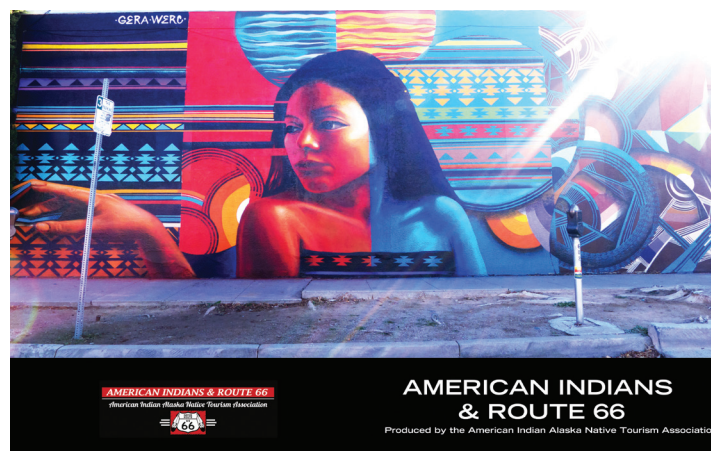
During the past year, the PLPP has made major strides in developing model projects for tribal inclusion in our nation's public lands throughout the country.

American Indians and Route 66

With a grant from the National Parks Service Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program, AIANTA led a project to create the *American Indians and Route 66 Guidebook*, sharing the history of tribes along the route. On May 5, 2016, AIANTA published the guidebook and debuted the accompanying website, www.AmericanIndiansAndRoute66.com.

Extending from Chicago to Santa Monica, Route 66 cuts through the heart of Indian Country—and 25 tribal nations—but an authentic tribal connection has rarely been made. By highlighting Route 66 cultural attractions and Indian-owned destinations and accommodations, *American Indians & Route 66* gives cultural context to the Route 66 story, connecting travelers from around the world with the authentic history of Route 66 and the homelands of the multitude of tribes along the way.

Millions of readers saw articles AIANTA attracted in the media, giving a voice to tribes on the historic route. AIANTA has distributed the *Guidebook* to nearly 20 nations around the globe as well as to more than a dozen locations along Route 66.



"The National Park Service has worked with AIANTA at both a national and local level since 2012, and our partnership has helped bridge gaps and build relationships at public lands across the country to begin ensuring cultural and tribal inclusion in our nation's parks. We look forward to developing our partnership even further and can't wait to see what the future of native inclusion at the parks holds in the years to come."

– Donald Leadbetter, National Tourism Program Manager, National Park Service



Transforming Desert View

This year, Aianta has been working on a momentous project for tribal inclusion in cultural interpretation at the Grand Canyon National Park. Through an innovative collaboration between the Grand Canyon Inter-tribal Advisory Council, National Park Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Grand Canyon Association, and the ArtPlace America National Grants Program, Aianta is helping to create an inter-tribal interpretive center at the Grand Canyon National Park's historic Desert View Watchtower and visitor area. Here, visitors can learn about the Canyon from tribal perspectives.

Today, tribes are gathering at Desert View and in the Watchtower for celebrations, elder and youth programs, authentic tribal interpretive programs; and artists from every tribe involved in the Inter-tribal Advisory Council have given hundreds of public cultural demonstrations; and the deteriorating murals in the watchtower are now being conserved. Beyond providing a spectacular venue for tribal artists and cultural interpretation, the Inter-tribal Advisory Council also identified an educational jobs program for tribal youth as a priority.

Heritage tourism collaborations like the Desert View project create positive impacts for all those involved—tribes, Native artists and public lands agencies as well as to travelers and visitors from around the world.

Since this project's beginning in 2014, the Desert View Watchtower has hosted 73 individual demonstrators for 131 days of demonstrations, and the visitor count in the past year is estimated at 500,000+.

Offering arts, crafts and dance demonstrations, music, cultural authenticity presentations, and storytelling, all traditionally associated tribes of the Grand Canyon are participating and have had the opportunity to share their unique traditions and cultures with visitors from all over the globe.

Not only has the Desert View project expanded the educational experiences of travelers to the Grand Canyon while helping tribes perpetuate their own cultures, it has also provided economic opportunity to those involved. Demonstrators are compensated for their time and reap the economic benefits of direct sales to Grand Canyon visitors.

OUR VALUED PARTNERS

AIANTA is the only American Indian participant included in the President's National Travel & Tourism Strategy, introduced in 2012 with a goal of 100 million international visitors a year by 2021.

Partners and Stakeholders

U.S. Department of the Interior (MOU with the following agencies):

- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Tribal Technical Assistance Programs
- National Park Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

U.S. Department of Commerce Office of Travel and Tourism Industries

U.S. Small Business Administration

U.S. Travel Association

National Tour Association (MOU)

National Geographic Society Sustainable Destinations (MOU)

National Congress of American Indians (MOU)

National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development

Native American Rights Fund (MOU)

National Tribal Geospatial Information Support Center (MOU)

National Indian Gaming Association (MOU)

National Scenic Byways

American Recreation Coalition

American Association of Parks and Recreation

American Indian Law Center

George Washington University International Institute of Tourism Studies (LOI)

International Tourism Marketing (ITM)

University of Wisconsin at Stout

New York University

Western States Tourism Policy Council (MOU)

Southeast Tourism Society (MOU)

Native American Tourism of Wisconsin

Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes (MOU)

Kilpatrick Stockton and Townsend (LOI)

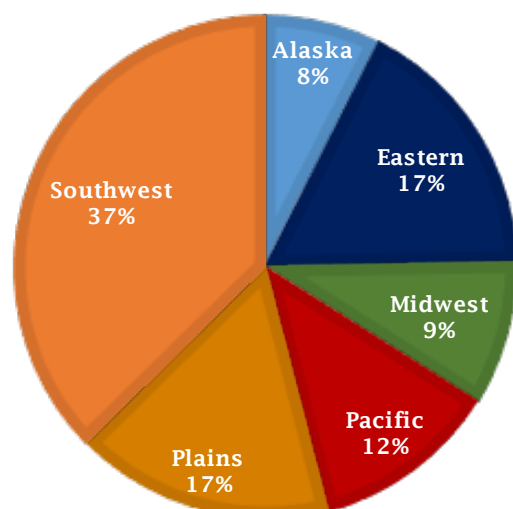
Powers Pyles Sutter & Verville PC (LOI)

Hobbs Straus Dean & Walker, LLP (LOI)

OUR MEMBERS

MEMBERSHIP BY REGION

■ Alaska ■ Eastern ■ Midwest ■ Pacific ■ Plains ■ Southwest



AIANTA is grateful to our members, who represent a network of leaders from a multitude of sectors working to advance tribal tourism.

Through AIANTA membership, tribes, members of the tourism industry, federal, state and local governments, colleges and universities and others form a resource network and are able to share experiences and support one another.

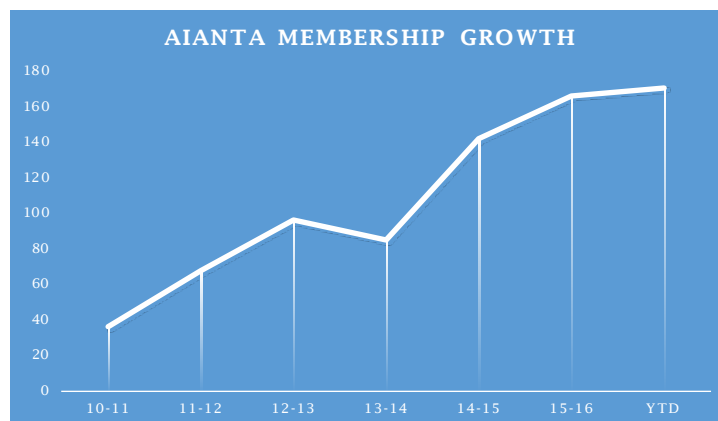
AIANTA members are well-informed and play a key role in supporting sustainable and authentic tribal tourism that benefits not only your tribe, but all tribes. With your help, we'll continue to make sure that the right national decision makers hear your voice—and all our voices—so our people can thrive and grow.

Membership levels include: Tribes; Native Owned Businesses and Organizations; Businesses, Organizations and Non-Profits; Corporate Benefactors; Individuals, Seniors (55 and older) and Students

OUR MEMBERS

Member Tribes

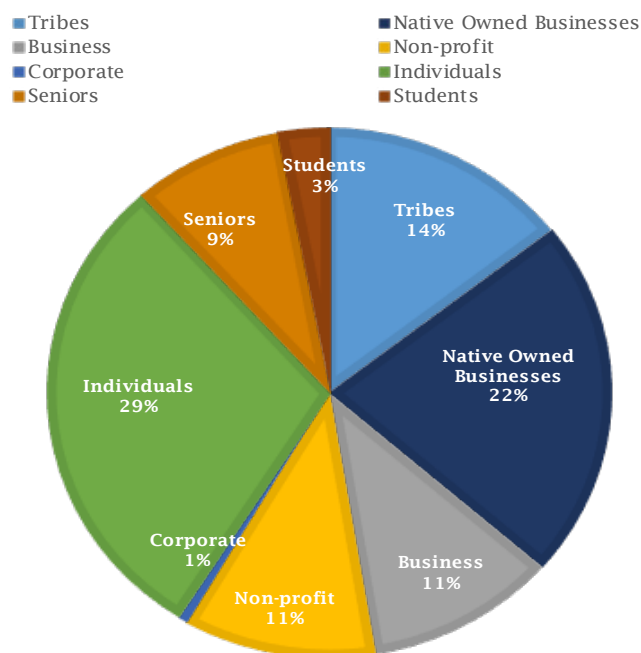
Apsaalooké Nation	Mescalero Tribe/Inn of the Mountain Gods
Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska	Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
Cherokee Nation	Muscogee Creek Nation
Chickasaw Country	Navajo Nation/Navajo Nation Hospitality Enterprise
Chickaloon Indian Village	Pueblo of Pojoaque
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma	Puyallup Tribe of Indians
Confederated Tribes of Colville/Colville Gaming LLC	Seneca Nation of Indians
Comanche Nation	Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation	Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs	St. Regis Mohawk Tribe
Grace Hospitality/Yavapai-Prescott	Suquamish Tribe
Ho-Chunk Nation	Tulalip Tribes
	Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation/We-Ko-Pa Resort
	Wrangell Cooperative Association



Native Owned Business Members

Adventurous Antelope
 Canyon Photo Tours
 Alaska Native Voices
 Alaskan Dream Cruises
 American Indian Chamber of Commerce of New Mexico
 Antelope Canyon Navajo Tours
 Apache Nugget Corporation
 Cape Fox Corporation
 Chez Felicite'
 Exhibit Solutions
 Fort Belknap
 Community Economic Development Corporation
 Grand Canyon Resort Corporation
 Hilton Santa Fe Buffalo Thunder
 Huna Totem Corporation/ANCSA
 Native Village Corporation
 Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
 Isleta Resort & Casino
 Kodiak Brown Bear Center
 Moenkopi Legacy Inn & Suites
 Monument Valley Simpson's
 Trailhandler Tours, LLC
 Native American Times
 Native American Tourism of Wisconsin
 Native American Travel. LLC
 Navajo Nation Hospitality Enterprise
 Navajo Parks & Recreation Department
 Oceanside Resort & RV Park
 Opiq Adventures, LLC.
 OPOS Tours & Travel
 Paragon Casino Resort
 Pearl River Resort
 Pine Ridge Area Chamber of Commerce
 Port Madison Enterprises
 Quil Ceda Village
 Radisson Hotel & Conference Center Green Bay
 Sky Ute Casino Resort
 Southern Ute Cultural Center & Museum
 Talking Stick Destination
 Taos Pueblo Tourism
 Tundra Tours, Inc./ Top of the World Hotel
 Ute Mountain Casino, Hotel & Resort
 Washoe Development Group
 Wind River Hotel & Casino
 Woodland Indian Art

AIANTA MEMBERSHIP BY CLASS



Members are invited to participate in AIANTA's working committees which meet monthly by conference calls: Destination Website, Education, International Outreach, Legislative, Marketing, Public Lands Partnerships Program

OUR GLOBAL REACH

AIANTA works on behalf of all 567 federally recognized tribes across the United States to bring their voice, their stories, and especially their tourism opportunities, to the world.

We're taking a unique, collaborative approach to the growing international tourism market. Tying outreach to promotion and marketing, AIANTA is ensuring Native Communities contribute to and share in the benefits of the travel industry—including significant job growth, increased revenue, strengthened culture and community development. AIANTA represents Native tourism through an expansive international outreach program including participation in some of the world's largest travel tradeshows: ITB Berlin, Showcase USA-Italy and the U.S. Travel Association's IPW.

AIANTA hosts tribes that are ready to enter the international market at ITB. As part of our role as host, we provide pre and post support in marketing, promotion and training. These efforts are showing strong results.

As the only national organization presenting Indian Country to the international market place, AIANTA has encouraged tourism demand in Indian Country and visitors have grown from a low of 693,000 when the organization began its efforts in 2007 to 1,958,000 in 2015, a 181% increase. From 2014 to 2015, American Indian communities saw a 19% increase in international visitors—from 1,652,000 to 1,958,000. Italian travelers (some of the highest spending travelers) to Indian Country rose 85% following AIANTA's first year showcasing Native America to Italy.* As the only national representative of Indian Country in the international marketplace, AIANTA's efforts to support America's number one service export have even been recognized nationally; in **2016 AIANTA was the first Native Organization to win the Presidential "E" Award for Export Service.**

**Statistics provided by U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration, National Travel & Tourism Office*

19%

*increase in
overseas visitors
to Indian Country
from 2014-2015*

1.95 Million+

*visitors to
Indian Country
in 2015*

85%

*Increase in Italian
visitors to Indian
Country
2014-2015*

"Chickasaw Country's partnership with AIANTA has provided the opportunity to attend the ITB travel trade show in Berlin at a discounted rate, and to exhibit as a collective group with other Native American partners. Attending ITB provides officials with Chickasaw Country the platform in which to network with other Native American tribes actively engaging in international tourism. Officials with Chickasaw Country are able to brand Chickasaw Country internationally through their networking efforts at ITB, as well as make connections with tour companies, journalists and tourism associated businesses interested in Native American tribes."

- Paige Williams, Director of Tourism, Chickasaw Nation

ITB Berlin

On March 9-13, 2016, Aianta participated in ITB-Berlin for the eighth consecutive year. All segments of the industry participate: tour operators, booking agents, travel agents, airlines, destinations, hotels, car rental companies, suppliers, buyers, destinations and media. In total, more than 10,000 exhibitors participated this year from around the world, attracting more than 100,000 people to the tradeshow.

Tribal delegations attending ITB Berlin under Aianta's auspices came from across the Nation: Chickasaw Nation (OK), Monument Valley Simpson's Trailhandler Tours (UT), Keepers of the Sacred Tradition of Pipemakers (MN), Navajo Nation Hospitality Enterprise (AZ), OPOS Tours and Travel (MN); and Aianta Board President Sherry L. Rupert (NV), Aianta staff, Camille Ferguson and Rachel Cromer, and Aianta consultant, John DeLeva also attended representing Aianta and Indian Country tourism as a whole.



Showcase USA-Italy

Aianta brought Indian country tourism to the Italian market again this year at Showcase USA-Italy in Torino, Italy, March 6-8, 2016.



Showcase USA-Italy, organized by the U.S. Commercial Service and Visit USA Association Italy, is an ideal event for both new-to-market companies and repeat exhibitors wishing to form new partnerships and reconfirm placements with existing clients. At the 18th annual edition, U.S. participants individually met with 25-30 major Italian tour operators in addition to travel agents and media contacts.

U.S. Travel Association's IPW

Aianta, funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs Department of Transportation (BIADOT), represented Indian Country tourism as part of the BIA booth in the Great Outdoors USA section at the U.S. Travel Association's 48th Annual IPW in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 18-22, 2016.

U.S. Travel Association's IPW is the travel industry's premier international marketplace and the largest generator of travel to the U.S.A. IPW hosted more than 1,100 exhibitor booths held by U.S. Suppliers of USA travel products and destinations and more than 5,000 attendees who are international travel buyers, domestic travel buyers and international journalists representing more than 70 countries.



CREATING ACCESS TO NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITIES: BUILDING NATIVEAMERICA TRAVEL

AIANTA is proud to have developed and produced the first ever consumer-facing destination website dedicated to Indian Country tourism, NativeAmerica.travel. The new website connects tribes directly to travelers and features inspiring historical, cultural, and outdoor narratives and high-impact photographs to invite them to explore Indian Country. To give all 567 federally-recognized tribes an opportunity to represent themselves in their own words, AIANTA is offering each tribe a dedicated page, free of charge with which to tell visitors about their history, culture and visitor attractions.

NativeAmerica.travel has proven to be an innovative, one-of a kind project that has given tribes all over the country an otherwise unavailable means of marketing their tourism businesses and products to the world, while also serving as an invaluable tool for economic development for tribes.

With this constantly evolving and growing destination website, AIANTA is proud to give tribes all around the U.S. an opportunity to tell their stories to the world and ensure their involvement in this powerful industry.

Since its launch in September 2015, NativeAmerica.travel has educated new audiences around tribal culture, history, and of course, the multitude of unique Indian Country travel experiences throughout the United States.

→ **15,230**
users have engaged with
NativeAmerica.travel

→ **80,000**
total page views
(September 2015-July 2016)

→ **10x**
increased website visitation
since its launch

→ **4**
average page visits
per session

→ **2.5**
average minutes spent on
the site per session



100+ native-owned attractions & accommodations

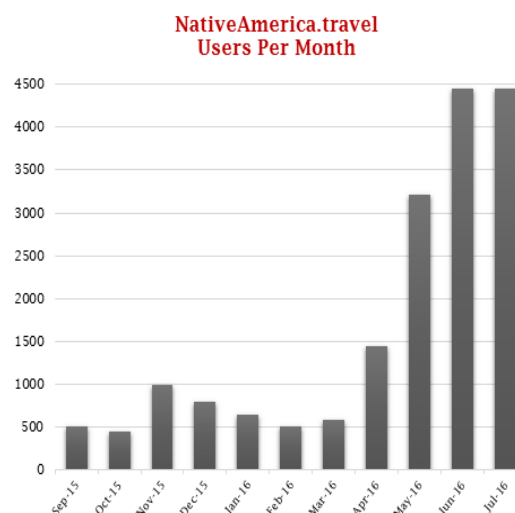


have partnered with NativeAmerica.travel to elevate Indian Country as a prime destination

15 Tribes



have claimed their dedicated pages to tell their story to visitors



From March-May 2016, the numbers of users of NativeAmerica.travel doubled each month and continue to climb

Search Engine Advertising (February-July 2016)

512,845 people saw the ad

\$19,359.68 advertising value (for FREE from Google Nonprofit AdWords Grant)

12,747 clicked through (opened the ad to get more information)

"Explore Native America" ad received the highest number of clicks at 7,000

EXPANDING INDIAN COUNTRY'S TOURISM INDUSTRY: THE AMERICAN INDIAN TOURISM CONFERENCE

In our work to help tribes create infrastructure and capacity through technical assistance, training, and educational resources, Aianta has hosted the annual American Indian Tourism Conference (AITC) since 1999. The 17th annual AITC was held at the Sky Ute Casino Resort in Ignacio, Colorado, September 13-17, 2015.

As the only national conference on tourism in Indian Country, AITC is designed to share knowledge, experience and best practices from tourism programs around the U.S. Each conference features mobile workshops, networking events and a line-up of expert speakers and presenters. The annual AITC strives to provide attendees with a quality educational forum to help attendees with their travel and tourism initiatives.

17th Annual American Indian Tourism Conference Sponsors

Alaska Heritage Tours	Colorado Tourism Office	Corporation	Sky Ute Casino Resort
Arizona Office of Tourism	Durango Area Tourism Office	Navajo Nation Gaming	State of Alaska, Dept. of Commerce, Economic Development
Bureau of Indian Affairs	Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians	Nevada Indian Territory Office of Hawaiian Affairs	Strong Ones
Bureau of Land Management	Inn of the Mountain Gods	Oneida Nation	Tamastslikt Cultural Institute
Cherokee Nation Businesses	Kalispel Tribe of Indians	Paragon Casino Resort	Tulalip Resort Casino
Chickasaw Nation	Kenai Fjords Tours	Port Madison Enterprises	Vision Maker Media
Choctaw Nation	Moenkopi Developers	Radisson Inn Green Bay	

Enough Good People Silent Auction and Awards Ceremony

"Through all the fits and starts, challenges and triumphs, we never doubted that good things would happen because there were, in every situation, enough good people to push or pull or argue us through to the next step." - Louis Adams, Salish

Aianta held its fourth annual Enough Good People Silent Auction and Awards Ceremony at the 2015 AITC in Ignacio, Colorado. The silent auction raised \$4,125 for the Aianta Scholarship Program. Aianta thanks all artisans who contributed to the Silent Auction's success.

At the 2015 awards ceremony, Aianta once again recognized the best of Indian Country Tourism with the following award winners:

TRIBAL DESTINATION OF THE YEAR

Acoma Sky City Cultural Center and Haak'u Museum

BEST CULTURAL HERITAGE EXPERIENCE

Alaskan Dream Cruises

EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE

Grand Canyon Skywalk - Monica Sedillo,
Elroy Havaton, Rory Majenty

ENOUGH GOOD PEOPLE INDIVIDUAL AWARDEES:

David Uberuaga, Superintendent at the Grand Canyon National Park

Joe Garcia, Former Governor of Ohkay Owingeh

Kristen Lamoureux, PhD, New York University

Ron Erdmann, Deputy Director of Research,
Office of Travel and Tourism Industries at the
U.S. Department of Commerce



EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF NATIVE TOURISM PROFESSIONALS

AIANTA's Scholarship Program

Tourism, as a means of education, proves again and again to marry the concepts of economic, social and cultural sustainability.

At AIANTA, we're developing education through tourism on several platforms. Through scholarships and a newly developed Cultural Tourism Certification Program created in partnership with George Washington University, we are expanding tribal tourism economies through education.

In 2013, AIANTA introduced the Tourism and Hospitality Scholarship Program for Native students pursuing a degree in the Hospitality and Tourism, Recreation or Culinary Arts fields. Since its inception, the program has provided support for nine scholars—two have finished their education and are pursuing careers in the industry.

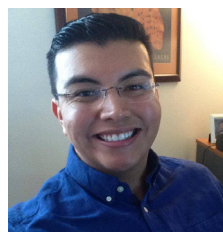
2015 scholarships were awarded to:

Hajishkei Brown (Navajo) is currently attending Arizona State University majoring in Business Management with an emphasis in Tourism.

Dedric Lupe is registered with the White Mountain Apache Tribes and is also of the Hopi and Tohono O'odham tribes, and is attending the University of San Francisco pursuing a Master's degree in Museum Studies.

Our second graduate, **Jordan Dresser** (Northern Arapaho) is completing his Master's degree in Museum Studies from the University of San Francisco.

In the spring of 2016, AIANTA awarded a scholarship to **Shawn M. Aragon** from the Pueblo of Acoma who is enrolled in the Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management Program at New Mexico State University.



"The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association Scholarship empowered me to take the next step in pursuing higher education. College is a time-consuming and demanding endeavor that very few Native Americans complete. AIANTA gave me the reassurance that not only could I complete and excel in school, but I had the support of Native communities throughout the country who believe in the power of tourism and the positive opportunities it can bring." - AIANTA Scholarship Recipient Jordan Dresser

Cultural Heritage Certificate Program

Our new Cultural Tourism Certificate Program, formed in partnership with George Washington University, is specifically designed to familiarize tribes and rural communities with the tools they need to develop a successful tourism program. The Cultural Tourism Certificate Program will introduce participants to the best practices and current trends in cultural tourism development. Designed as an online course, the program debuted at the 2016 American Indian Tourism Conference and will soon be available throughout Indian Country.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Taylor Roth & Company PLLP Certified Accountants have audited the financial statements of American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association, Inc. as of and for the year ending September 30, 2015, and have issued a report dated April 18, 2016, which contained an unqualified opinion. Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The accompanying schedule of expenditures of federal awards is presented for purposes of additional analysis as required by U.S. Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations, and is not a required part of the financial statements.

Auditors Opinion on Each Major Federal Program

"In our opinion, American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association, Inc. complied, in all material respects, with the types of compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on each of its major federal programs for the year ended September 30, 2015"

Findings: Financial Statement Audit

There were no findings to the financial statements audit

Findings and Questioned Costs: Major Federal Award Programs Audit

There were no findings or questioned costs for the major federal programs

Auditee qualifies as a low risk auditee. A full financial report is available upon request.

AMERICAN INDIAN ALASKA NATIVE TOURISM ASSOCIATION, INC.

SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS

YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015

Federal Grantor/ Pass-through Agency Program Title	CFDA Number	Grant/ Agency Number	Federal Expenditures
INDIRECT PROGRAMS			
Department of Interior - BIA/DOT Cooperative Agreement			
Organizational Development & Operations	20.205	A12AC01264	\$ 399,183
Regional Outreach	20.205	A12AC01264	11,870
Expand Tribal Tourism Education & Training	20.205	A12AC12364	135,420
Create a Strategic Plan for Tribal Spatial Data Infrastructure	20.205	A12AC01264	233,174
Development - International Tourism/Outreach	20.205	A12AC01264	80,828
Form and Nurture Partnerships	20.205	A12AC01264	135,287
Raise Public Awareness	20.205	A12AC01264	32,509
DIRECT PROGRAMS			
US Department of Interior NPS Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program	15.958	P14PG00072	11,173
Total Expenditures of Federal Awards			\$1,039,444

2015 BIA Cooperative Agreement Expenditures



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

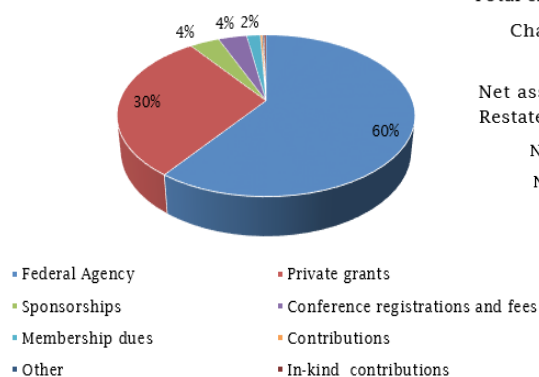
AMERICAN INDIAN ALASKA NATIVE TOURISM ASSOCIATION STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2015

	<u>Amount</u>
Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents - unrestricted	\$ 1,040,022
Cash and cash equivalents - temporarily restricted	520,358
Accounts receivable (Note 3)	12,298
Prepaid expenses	<u>7,000</u>
Total assets	\$ 1,579,678
Liabilities and net assets	
Liabilities	
Accounts payable	\$ 21,292
Accrued payroll and related costs	17,015
Deferred revenue (Note 4)	696,267
Commitments and contingencies (Note 5)	<u> </u>
Total liabilities	<u>734,574</u>
Net assets	
Unrestricted	324,746
Temporarily restricted (Note 6)	<u>520,358</u>
Total net assets	<u>845,104</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 1,579,678

AMERICAN INDIAN ALASKA NATIVE TOURISM ASSOCIATION STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2015

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
Revenue and other support Federal grants	\$ 1,039,444	\$	\$ 1,039,444
Private grants		518,000	518,000
Sponsorships		66,500	66,500
Conference registrations and fees	63,912		63,912
Membership dues	30,708		30,708
Contributions	1,010	3,845	4,855
Other	3,111		3,111
In-kind contributions	4,769		4,769
Net assets released from restrictions (Note 7)	<u>80,037</u>	<u>(80,037)</u>	<u> </u>
Total revenue and other support	<u>1,222,991</u>	<u>508,308</u>	<u>1,731,299</u>
Expense			
Program services	773,929		773,929
Supporting services			
Management and	294,623		294,623
Fund-raising	<u>94,744</u>		<u>94,744</u>
Total expense	<u>1,163,296</u>	<u> </u>	<u>1,163,296</u>
Change in net assets	59,695	508,308	568,003
Net assets, beginning of year, originally stated	347,101		347,101
Restatements (Note 8)	<u>(82,050)</u>	<u>12,050</u>	<u>(70,000)</u>
Net assets, beginning of year, restated	265,051	12,050	277,101
Net assets, end of year	<u>\$ 324,746</u>	<u>\$ 520,358</u>	<u>\$ 845,104</u>
			574,098
			<u>986,282</u>

Federal Grants and Other Revenue



The Association's primary sources of funding are obtained through federal grants, making up approximately 60% of the total revenue. This is down compared to 2014 where total revenue from federal grants was 86%. The organization diversified funding sources obtaining 26% of funds for other projects.



LOOKING FORWARD: 2017

The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association faced new challenges and took on new opportunities in FY2015, and met them with excitement, flexibility, and effective programs and plans. We are thrilled with our success in supporting Indian Country as a whole, as well as all of the individual communities that saw positive economic impacts from tourism.

In the coming year, we will implement and expand our education programming, trainings and technical assistance in order to reach all of Indian Country and directly impact Native students across the country. We will also be working to expand and strengthen our regional outreach to provide more targeted and accessible trainings and resources.

At home and around the globe, we will continue to work on behalf of Indian Country to perpetuate the unique cultures of Native America by educating international travelers and tourism professionals on the powerfully authentic experiences we have to offer. Additional opportunities within our international outreach and education program will be developed and shared. AIANTA will continue to partner with federal agencies, academia, and others to develop model programs and projects that advance Indian Country and build capacity for tribal tourism.

In achieving these goals together, we will make Indian Country's communities stronger.

We welcome your support for our initiatives to help Indian Country share their stories and expand their economies through tourism. To learn more about how you can help us help Indian Country, contact Hannah Peterson, AIANTA's Development Director at 612-201-2408.



AIANTA's FY2015 Board of Directors

Sherry L. Rupert, President, Southwest Region
Rachel Moreno, Vice President, Alaska Region
James Surveyor, Secretary, At-Large
LaDonna Allard, Treasurer, Plains Region
Rowena Akana, Pacific Region
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AIANTA's Staff

Camille Ferguson, Executive Director
Hannah Peterson, Development Director
Aimee Awonohopay, Public Lands Partnerships Program Manager
Rachel Cromer Howard, Public Relations & Media Specialist
Sandra Anderson, IT & Website Development Coordinator
Gail Chehak, Membership & Development Coordinator
Sherrie L. Bowman, Office & Administrative Manager
Mary Chavez, Administrative Assistant

AIANTA's Consultants and Advisors

Edward Hall III, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Jana Prewitt, Legislative Consultant
Paul Moorehead, Legislative Consultant
John DeLeva, International Media Consultant
Mary Motsenbocker, International Outreach Consultant
Sammye Meadows, Public Lands Partnerships Consultant
Anna Barrera, Research & Website Development Consultant



AIANTA

American Indian Alaska Native
Tourism Association

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