



ANNUAL REPORT FY2017



AIAANTA
American Indian Alaska Native
Tourism Association

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Members, Partners and Friends:

The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association Inc. (AIANTA), in collaboration with its partners, members and sponsors, had a remarkable year. We added new tourism planning tools to the NativeAmerica.travel destination website, our Go International training achieved maximum attendance, our tourism certificate training is ready to roll out, and we received tremendous tribal and industry support for NATIVE Act funding from throughout the nation.

According to our partners at the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Travel & Tourism Office, Indian Country tourism held its own in 2016 in international markets. While overall U.S. numbers declined slightly, Native American communities saw an estimate of nearly 2 million overseas visitors. We are proud that Native tourism continues to contribute to the largest service export in the United States—travel and tourism.

In 2016, AIANTA's exceptional board of directors, members and supporters, including 20 co-sponsors in Congress, succeeded in advancing Indian Country's key tourism priorities. We strengthened Indian Country's position in the national tourism industry and the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience (NATIVE) Act was signed into law.

As the only organization specifically dedicated to advancing Indian Country tourism across the United States, AIANTA took a very active role in 2017 in national policy discussions on behalf of tribes and tribal organizations engaged in cultural tourism. AIANTA did the necessary strategic planning and conferring with partners to facilitate implementation of the NATIVE Act and are in negotiations with the Bureau of Indian Affairs for a new cooperative agreement. We continued to play a key role as a platform, convener and thought leader bringing tribes and businesses together to expand tribal tourism.

In 2017, AIANTA continued to assist members, tribes, tourism leaders, partners and federal agencies in the enhancement and expansion of tribal capacity to accommodate visitors. We worked to develop and deliver additional education, training, technical assistance, resources and workforce development opportunities. We are at an exciting juncture in our work to attract additional resources and build capacity in Indian Country using cultural tourism as the catalyst. If you haven't joined already, now is your opportunity to become active in AIANTA. As the NATIVE Act is implemented and federal agency partnerships provide new building blocks, AIANTA welcomes your support and leadership to create Native jobs and perpetuate tribal heritage in your community and throughout the United States.

In this report, you'll see many highlights from this very productive year. We are eager to share what we have accomplished through you, and we look forward to continuing our work together.

Gunalchéech- Thank you

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Camille Ferguson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Camille Ferguson,
AIANTA Executive Director

WHO WE ARE

OUR MISSION

To define, introduce, grow and sustain American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian tourism that honors traditions and values.

As the only organization specifically dedicated to advancing Indian Country tourism across the United States, AIANTA serves as the voice and resource for tribes and tribal organizations engaged in cultural tourism.

AIANTA works on behalf of all 567 federally recognized tribes to support and promote authentic Indian Country tourism. We provide technical assistance, training and resources to tribes and work hard to make sure tribal tourism has a voice at the national level.

AIANTA's board and staff have significant training and expertise in all aspects of Indian Country tourism. Many of our board members advise state and federal governments, ensuring that tribes have a seat at the tables where decisions are made.

1.9 million

overseas visitors to Indian Country in 2016

180%

growth in overseas visitors to
Indian Country since 2007

Thank You!

To our members and partners, thank you for your commitment and support. The results in this report and the impact to Indian Country wouldn't be possible without all of you.

Celebrating Our Accomplishments



AIANTA is awarded as an MDCP recipient, through the Department of Commerce

The NATIVE Act is signed into law

AIANTA hosts AITC 2016 in Tulalip, Washington

First Cultural Heritage Tourism class with George Washington University is launched at AITC

**FALL
2016**

AIANTA hosts Go International, a two-day training on the international marketplace

Camille Ferguson presents at the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada's annual International Aboriginal Tourism Conference in Nova Scotia, Canada

AIANTA's Board President Sherry L. Rupert testifies before House Committee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs

**WINTER
2016/2017**

SPRING 2017

AIANTA hosts tribes at ITB Berlin for the eighth consecutive year and attends Showcase USA-Italy for the third time

AIANTA secures Resolutions of Support from organizations and tribal leaders across the country for implementation of the NATIVE Act

AIANTA launches tribal agritourism project in partnership with the Food and Farm Communications Fund

AIANTA's Executive Director Camille Ferguson participates in the Partnership for Conservation of the Amazon via the IV Amazon Protected Area Tourism Seminar, in Brazil in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service

SUMMER 2017

AIANTA partners with Brand USA to host first Native-focused familiarization tour with Italian press

AIANTA's Executive Director Camille Ferguson testifies on behalf of AIANTA before the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee in Washington, D.C.

AIANTA's Executive Director Camille Ferguson presents tourism trends to the Inter-tribal Transportation Association (ITA) in Marysville, Washington

AIANTA attends and sponsors the Southeast Tourism Society's annual Congressional Summit on Travel and Tourism, where tourism leaders from across the country meet in Washington, D.C.

FALL 2017

AIANTA launches Cultural Heritage Certificate program, developed in partnership with George Washington University

AIANTA and Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada sign Memorandum of Understanding, solidifying the two organizations' collaboration

AIANTA hosts AITC 2017 in Green Bay, Wisconsin



OUR VOICE, OUR REACH



Aianta provides a strong voice for tribes in the U.S. and abroad. We work to tell the world about the unique stories and experiences that Indian Country offers through tourism. Working with you—our members, partners and friends throughout the industry—we will continue to make sure that the right audiences hear your voice—and all the voices of Indian Country—so our people can thrive.

Aianta outreach achievements in the past year include:

Reached people from **46** countries via social media and websites

Created **50 million** media impressions

Attracted more than **33,951** website views on Aianta.org

Placed more than **100** earned media stories

Distributed **22** news releases

Placed **25** paid advertisements

Sent more than **100** email blasts, each with a reach of nearly **6,000** individuals per distribution

Attracted **4,300** Facebook likes

Attracted **900** Twitter followers

Distributed **12** monthly Aianta e-newsletters, each to a readership of nearly **6,000**

Participated in **40** speaking engagements across North America and globally, engaging with **214,000** individuals in Indian Country and the tourism industry

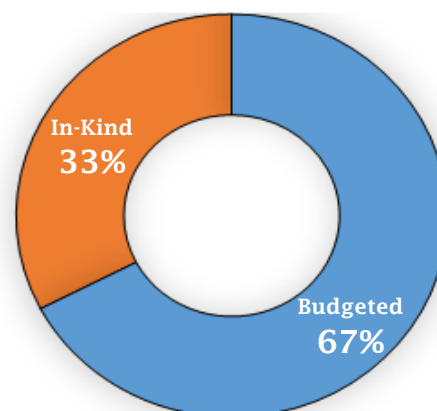
Distributed **19** announcements for funding, training and promotional opportunities to members and partners

OUR VOICE, OUR REACH

With the passage of the NATIVE Act and the growth of Aianta's programming and reach, Aianta has increased its technical assistance and training to expand the impact of cultural tourism to Indian Country. We are reaching even more tribes, tribal organizations and contacts in the tourism industry. Between September 2016 and August 2017, Aianta received 33% of its total travel expenses as in-kind relief for outreach and technical assistance for tourism development from tribal and industry partners across the nation.

Travel for the purpose of providing technical assistance and training by Aianta staff and board of directors represents 28% of all of the organization's travel. Further, 72% of travel was related to public outreach efforts, providing information on Aianta's programming and resources to help tourism development and capacity building.

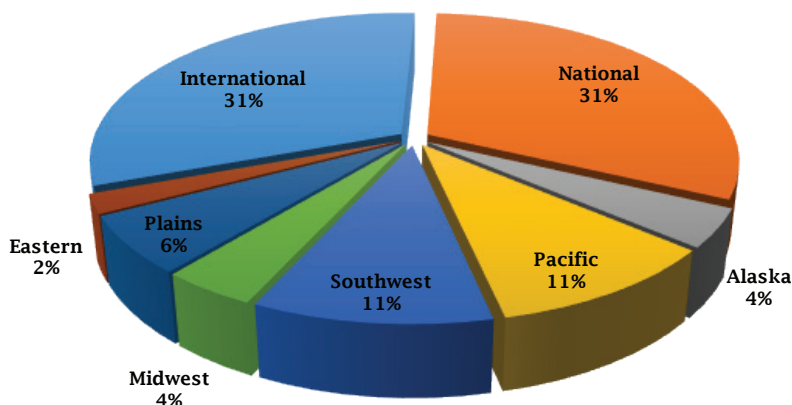
Outreach Expenditures



Aianta was able to increase exposure by 33% in FY2017 thanks to generous in-kind support from our partners dedicated to ensuring the furthering of our mission.

Aianta reaches audiences across the nation and the globe with increased support from regional board members who actively assist in meetings within their regions. Nationally, Aianta staff and board of directors attended venues including the Southeast Tourism Society's Congressional Summit on Travel and Tourism, the National Indian Gaming Association's annual convention, the National Congress of American Indians and Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, as well as serving on national committees. Internationally, participation at ITB Berlin, Showcase USA-Italy, WTM London and IPW contributed to our strong global outreach efforts.

Who Heard Our Voice?



In FY2017, our direct outreach efforts resulted in exposure to approximately 214,000 individuals in Indian Country and the tourism industry including federal, tribal, industry, international and consumer contacts.

Attracting Funding Resources to Implement the NATIVE Act

On September 23, 2016, President Obama signed the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act (NATIVE Act) into law (130 STAT. 847).

The NATIVE Act is designed to advance and strengthen relationships and increase coordination and collaboration between Indian Country tourism, federal agencies and the national tourism industry so that Native American tourism can grow to meet market demand, boost tribal economies and create jobs in Native communities throughout the nation.

The intent of the NATIVE Act is:

- ➔ To enhance and integrate Native American tourism into federal management planning
 - ➔ To increase coordination and collaboration between tribes and Federal Agencies with tourism assets
 - ➔ Expand heritage and cultural tourism opportunities in the U.S.
 - ➔ Provide grants, loans, and technical assistance to Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations...[to] (A) spur important infrastructure development; (B) increase tourism capacity; and (C) elevate living standards in Native American communities. (NATIVE Act of 2016)
-

AIANTA is nearing an agreement with the Department of the Interior to be a nonprofit facilitator of the NATIVE Act, and AIANTA has spent FY2017 working to attract funding to carry out the provisions of the NATIVE Act and build tribal capacity for tourism and tourism infrastructure.

AIANTA has created a strategic plan to implement the NATIVE Act and is working hard to engage tribes, industry leaders, foundations and our federal partners to fulfill the Act's intent. We await the FY2018 Congressional budget to see how quickly we can move forward with implementation including numerous projects throughout the six regions and working with tourism tribes to address their development needs.

Read the full text of the NATIVE Act at [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov)



CELEBRATING OUR VALUED PARTNERS



Building Strategic Partnerships

AIANTA's best work is done by connecting with tribal, federal, industry and congressional leaders to build relationships. Through strong relationships with our partners and stakeholders, we are able to move our mission forward. In FY2017, we worked to grow our existing relationships while attracting new partners to support our work.

Celebrating New Partnerships

In FY2017, AIANTA welcomed new partnerships to expand the impact of collaborative approaches to bringing Native voices to public land tourism related projects, including working toward formalized partnerships with the National Trails Inter-Mountain Region and Bureau of Land Management. These new partnerships will lay the groundwork for future collaborative first-voice interpretive projects throughout public lands across the country and in Indian Country.

AIANTA formed and led the Public Lands Inter-Agency Advisory Committee. The Committee is comprised of volunteer members of the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management and United States Forest Service. The Committee's objective is to empower tribal communities through tourism related activity and development. The group also serves as a clearing house for improving Tribal access to tourism-related programs available through federal land management agencies.

AIANTA established The Road Ahead Tribal Advisory Group. This group includes Tribal leaders from the five states with tribal representation along Route 66. Group members from Illinois, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona and California meet regularly to advance The Road Ahead's mission. The Road Ahead is a national organization committed to preserving the heritage and advancing the economic development of Route 66. It is backed by the World Monuments Fund.

We are also expanding our cross-border Tribal relationships with a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada, signed at the Canadian Embassy on September 7th of this year.

We were also happy to welcome new partnerships to respond to the technical assistance and training needs expressed by our members. The Food and Farm Communications Fund has partnered with AIANTA to launch a new Tribal and Native Nations Agritourism Product Development Training pilot. The program pilot was created in response to membership feedback that more technical assistance and training was needed on developing agritourism in Indian Country. In support of our pilot, First Nations Development Institute partnered with AIANTA to provide a webinar training opportunity on their webinar platform "Cultivate Your Knowledge in Tribal Agritourism: Trends Challenges and Opportunities." The webinar, held on July 27, 2017, was a great success, attracting 88 participants.

Celebrating Ongoing Partnerships: Our Current Partners & 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. Forest Service
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

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

Recreation One Stop

National Trails Inter-Mountain Region

The Road Ahead Initiative

Grand Canyon National Park

Grand Canyon Association

ArtPlace America

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)

Native American Finance Officers Association

Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada (MOU)

United South and Eastern Tribes

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)

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

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

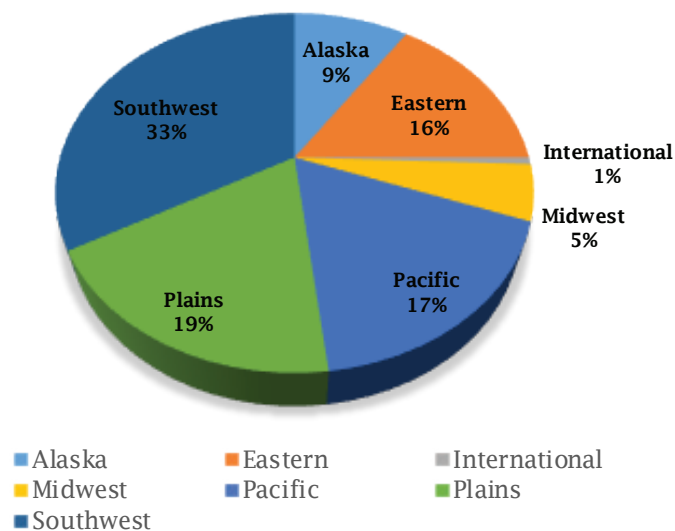
AIANTA members—tribes, businesses and individuals—join and advance a movement that promotes and honors tribal culture and provides economic opportunities.

Forming an extensive resource network, members are able to share and acquire knowledge with other members and from experts in creating culturally authentic tourism.

Members are invited to participate in AIANTA's working committees, which meet monthly by conference call: Membership/Fundraising, NativeAmerica.travel, Education, International Outreach, Marketing and Public Lands Partnerships.

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

Membership by Regions



OUR MEMBERS

Tribes & Tribal Enterprises

Alaska Native Voices, Huna Totem Corporation
 Apache Nugget Corporation, Jicarilla Apache Nation
 Apsaalooké Nation (Crow Tribe), Apsaalooké Nation Tourism
 Tundra Tours, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation
 Blackfeet Manpower, Blackfeet Tribe
 Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
 Cherokee Nation
 Chickaloon Village Council
 Chickasaw Nation
 Chickasaw Country, Chickasaw Nation
 Choctaw Country
 Coeur D'Alene Casino & Resort, Coeur D'Alene Tribe
 Colville Gaming LLC, Confederated Tribes of Colville
 Confederated Tribes of Umatilla
 Fort Belknap Community Econ. Develop. Corporation, Gros Ventre & Assiniboine Tribes
 Grace Hospitality, Yavapai-Prescott Apache
 Grand Canyon Resort Corporation, Hualapai Indian Tribe
 Hilton Buffalo Thunder, Pueblo of Pojoaque

Inn of The Mountain Gods Resort & Casino, Mescalero Apache Tribe
 Isleta Resort & Casino, Pueblo of Isleta
 Kake Tribal Corporation, Kake Tribal Corporation
 Kodiak Brown Bear Cente, KONIAG Regional Corporation
 LDF Business Development Corporation, Lac du Flambeau Chippewa Tribe
 Legends Casino Hotel, Yakama Indian Nation
 Metlakatla Indian Community
 Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
 Moenkopi Developers Corporation, Upper Village of Moenkopi, Hopi Tribe
 Muckleshoot Tribe
 Muscogee Creek Nation
 Native American Travel, Seminole Tribe of Florida
 Navajo Nation Tourism, Navajo Nation
 Navajo Parks & Recreation Department, Navajo Nation
 Nez Perce Tribe Enterprise Board, Nez Perce Tribe*
 Wind River Hotel & Casino, Northern Arapaho Tribe
 Oceanside Resort & RV Park, Quileute Nation
 Oneida Airport Hotel Corporation, Oneida Nation
 Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin

Organized Village of Kasaan
 Paragon Casino Resort, Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana
 Pueblo of Taos, Department of Tourism
 Puyallup Tribe of the Puyallup Reservation
 Quil Ceda Village, Tulalip Tribes
 Sac & Fox Nation*
 Shoshone-Bannock Hotel, Shoshone Bannock Tribe*
 Sky Ute Casino Resort, Southern Ute Indian Tribe
 St. Regis Mohawk
 Suquamish Tribe, Port Madison Enterprises
 Talking Stick Destination, Salt River
 Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
 The People's Center, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
 Tulalip Tribes
 United Houma Nation
 Ute Mountain Casino Resort, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
 Washoe Development Group, Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California
 We-ko-Pa Resort & Conference Center, Yavapai Apache
 Wrangell Cooperative Association, Village of Wrangell
 Yakama Nation, Legends Casino Hotel

Native Owned Businesses

Adventurous Antelope Canyon Photo Tours
 Alaskan Dream Cruises
 Antelope Canyon Navajo Tours
 Chez Felicite'*
 Exhibit Solutions
 John Hall's Alaska
 Monument Valley Simpson's Trailhandler Tours, LLC
 Native American Times
 Opiq Adventures, LLC.
 OPOS Tours
 Passport To Pueblo Country*
 Pine Ridge Area Chamber of Commerce
 Tribal Print Source*

Non-Profits (Native Boards)

American Indian Chamber of Commerce of Arizona
 American Indian Chamber of Commerce of New Mexico
 American Indian Cultural Center and Museum
 Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
 Native American Tourism of Wisconsin
 Red Cloud Indian School Heritage Center*
 Woodland Indian Art

State Tourism Offices

Arizona Office of Tourism
 Colorado Tourism Office
 Hawaii Tourism Authority
 Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development
 Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association
 Office of Hawaiian Affairs
 South Dakota Missouri River Tourism
 South Dakota Tourism
 Wyoming Office of Tourism

Businesses/Organizations

Alaska Airlines
 Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce
 Alcatraz Cruises LLC
 AMERICA Journal
 Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation
 Indian Arts & Crafts Association
 Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP
 Powers Pyles Sutter & Verville PC
 Tauck
 Vision Maker Media
 Western National Parks Association
 Wind River Visitors Council/McCormick Marketing

Individuals, Seniors and Students are not listed

** New Member during this period*



EXPANDING 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 destinations and experiences, to the world.

We're taking a unique, collaborative approach to growing the 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 a growing international outreach program including participation in some of the world's largest travel tradeshows: ITB Berlin and Showcase USA-Italy. In the coming year, AIANTA is eager to introduce an expanded program to include cooperative training that will also include the World Travel Market in London and a larger presence at the U.S. Travel Association's IPW.

In AIANTA's efforts in the international marketplace, educating and training tribes and tribal businesses to work effectively and efficiently internationally is always a top priority. As part of our role hosting tribes and Native-owned businesses, we provide pre and post show support in marketing, promotion and training.

As the only national organization presenting Indian Country to the international marketplace, AIANTA has seen the demand and visitors grow from a low point of 693,000 when the organization started its international outreach in 2007 to 1,958,000 in 2016—more than a 180% increase. It is forecasted that there will be over 2.4 million overseas visits to Indian Country by 2021.

While 2016 overseas travel to the USA was down 2%, visitation to Indian Country saw no decline. International interest and visitation in Native communities remains strong.

Travel Forecast

It is estimated that by 2021:



48,642 jobs will be supported by international travelers to the U.S. who visit Indian Country

2.4 million overseas travelers will visit Indian Country

MDCP

This year, AIANTA received an award from the International Trade Administration's (ITA) Market Development Cooperator Program (MDCP). The MDCP award will help AIANTA train tribes and tribal firms in marketing to European residents and launch a web-based marketing/PR campaign to showcase destinations, attractions, landscapes and tours. The MDCP resources are expected to increase tribal tourism revenues from the United Kingdom and Italy by approximately \$6 million during the next three years. Providing Indian Country even more resources, the MDCP award includes extensive technical assistance from ITA to strengthen tourism in Native America, ultimately increasing U.S. exports.

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

Go International

AIANTA's efforts to increase technical assistance and training for tribes and businesses from throughout the United States included the launch of a new two-day training seminar, Go International. With the growing demand for Indian Country tourism destinations and experiences, AIANTA is working hard to address the training needs of our members and tribes. Go International's annual in-depth training held in January addresses a multitude of topics and utilizes AIANTA's expert partners and educators to make sure businesses are international market-ready.

Tradeshow Participation and Training

AIANTA is introducing new opportunities for increased participation in the international marketplace through our partnership with BIA and the MDCP award.

In FY2017, AIANTA attended and hosted tribes at some of the largest and most influential travel tradeshows around the world. Each year in March, AIANTA hosts tribal partners at ITB Berlin, providing extensive pre-show training for nearly three months ahead of the show. Through conference calls and webinars, AIANTA is able to partner with organizations and experts from Brand USA, the U.S. Department of Commerce, International Tourism Marketing (ITM) and others to provide the highest caliber of training and education available in the industry. In the coming years, AIANTA will work to expand this valuable training into markets including Italy, the UK and the global market of IPW.

AIANTA's work to increase tribal tourism capacity and overseas visitation to tribal communities was recognized by the leadership of U.S. Commercial Service Italy, the Visit USA Association and by the attendees of the Showcase USA-Italy tradeshow. With this important recognition comes a powerful opportunity for tribes and tribal tourism businesses to enter into the Italian market, a high per-capita market with great interest in Native cultures.



Italian Familiarization Tour: Giving Italians a Taste of Indian Country

AIANTA—in partnership with a multitude of tribal partners, Brand USA and the U.S. Commercial Service Italy—hosted a first-of-its-kind familiarization (FAM) tour focused on Indian Country throughout the Southwest from May 28-June 2, 2017. AIANTA hosted five select Italian travel writers and one Italian Commercial Services representative through a unique, experiential tour of Arizona and New Mexico.



AIANTA and Brand USA, the destination marketing organization for the USA, worked together to create a completely Native American culturally-focused itinerary. Collaborating with tribal partners throughout the two states, the 6-day tour garnered invaluable editorial coverage featuring tribal businesses, tours and organizations to the quickly growing Italian market. AIANTA and our partners look forward to executing more of these types of collaborative FAM tours.

YOUR STORY, YOUR VOICE: TELL IT YOUR WAY ON NATIVEAMERICA .TRAVEL

AIANTA has developed and hosts the first ever consumer-facing destination website dedicated to Indian Country tourism. NativeAmerica.travel connects tribes directly to travelers and features inspiring narratives and images to invite them to explore Indian Country.

Each federally recognized tribe has their own page to claim. The website features a dedicated webpage for all 567 tribes across the country to showcase and promote their attractions, destinations and experiences.

To make this valuable and unique marketing opportunity for tribes in the tourism industry as accessible as possible, the NativeAmerica.travel team provides top-tier training opportunities and online assistance tools for members who join the site:

TOURISM 101

The NativeAmerica.travel team attends tribal conferences spanning the country to conduct outreach and deliver tourism training to tribes and Native-owned tourism businesses.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT INTERNSHIP

Students are provided opportunities to work on the destination website.

TRIBAL TOURISM STATISTICS PACKAGE

AIANTA has begun collecting standardized tourism data for tribes, available only through NativeAmerica.travel.

GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Tribes can gather and map tourism-related data in order to make more information available around tourism development decisions for communities.



→ **35,156**
*users have engaged with
NativeAmerica.travel*

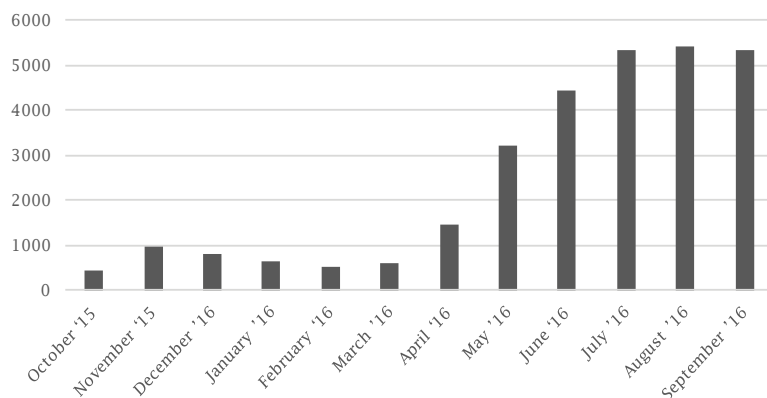
→ **98,474**
page views in FY2017

→ **5x**
*increased website visitation
since September 2016*

→ **3**
*average page visits
per session*

→ **2**
*average minutes spent on
the site per session*

**NativeAmerica.travel
Users Per Month**



TRIBAL PARTNERS

Eastern Band of Cherokee
Cherokee Nation
Chickasaw Nation
Fort McDowell
Yavapai Nation
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
Navajo Nation
Organized Village of Kasaan

Pueblo of Jemez
Pueblo of Pojoaque
Pueblo of Santa Ana
Reno-Sparks Indian Colony
Salt River Pima-Maricopa
Sitka Tribe
Standing Rock Sioux
United Houma Nation
Wrangell Cooperative Association

BUILDING ON THE TRIBAL TOURISM EDUCATIONAL CONTINUUM

Community and economic development begin with education. At Aianta, we understand the value of starting from the source—tribes in tourism—to develop a sustainable industry and to foster growth. We work hard to provide educational resources, training and technical assistance to our members, partners and friends.

In FY2017, Aianta addressed a number of the needs for training in and around Indian Country through partnerships, collaborations and new educational programming.

To provide entry level education as well as advanced tourism industry resources to tribes and tribal businesses from all levels of the tourism industry, Aianta hosts the annual American Indian Tourism Conference. At the annual conference, Aianta also hosts a silent auction, the proceeds of which go to the scholarship program—supporting Native students to succeed, even in the earliest stages of their careers.

Aianta has partnered with George Washington University to develop and launch an online professional Cultural Heritage Tourism Certificate program. This tailored, 6-course certificate program is designed as a self-managed process to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to leverage tourism as an engine for economic and community development.

Further responding to the needs of Indian Country, Aianta developed and launched an in-depth, two-day training program, Go International. This training program is designed to help tribes and businesses learn how to build capacity, develop product and gain the

skills needed to be ready for the international marketplace.

Further addressing members' needs, Aianta has launched its first agritourism program in partnership with the Food and Farm Communications Fund. As part of the pilot, Aianta partnered with First Nations Development Institute to provide a webinar training opportunity on their platform, "Cultivate your knowledge in Tribal Agritourism: Trends Challenges and Opportunities."

In addition to hosting technical assistance and training opportunities, Aianta staff and board of directors have participated in trainings and educational opportunities regionally throughout FY2017, including the Nevada Tribal Tourism Conference, the Hawaii Tourism Conference and the Udall Foundation's leadership program.

Working with other training programs and organizations internationally, Aianta also provided education to rural and developing tourism professionals in Brazil, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, as well as to the indigenous tourism industry in Canada, working with the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada.

Aianta's Scholarship Program

Since its inception, Aianta's scholarship program has supported four graduates, all of whom pursued further education in the hospitality and tourism field. Aianta is proud to support and empower the next generation of Native tourism professionals.

2016 Scholarship Awards:

Vanessa Fernando (Laguna/Acoma Pueblos), New Mexico State University

Tracee Abeita-Torres (Isleta Pueblo), University of New Mexico

Marcus Seymour (Laguna/Acoma Pueblos), Institute of American Indian Arts

Three additional students will receive awards for the fall semester of 2017. All students receive \$1,000 per academic school year as long as they maintain the set grade point average and meet all other criteria.

Current student and artist Del Curfman: *"Born and raised in Montana, my Apsaalooke' (Crow Nation of Montana) culture has been a constant influence. [Transferring] to the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) to explore the visual arts has been a corridor to new ideas and perceptions. I find art in nature—as the wind blows a leaf in a fluid creative line. I find line, shape, and form in anything and everything. With each new work fulfilled, it is my desire that the viewer can see the development, the growth, a piece of my journey."*



EXPANDING KNOWLEDGE AND OPPORTUNITY: THE AMERICAN INDIAN TOURISM CONFERENCE

To help tribes create tourism capacity through technical assistance, training and educational resources, AIANTA has hosted the annual American Indian Tourism Conference (AITC) since 1999. The 18th annual AITC was held at the Tulalip Resort Casino in Tulalip, Washington, September 12-14, 2016.

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.

Thank You to Our 2016 American Indian Tourism Conference Sponsors

Bureau of Indian Affairs	Arizona Office of Tourism	Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Tulalip Tribes & Tulalip Resort Casino	Cherokee Nation Businesses	Native American Travel
Navajo Parks and Recreation Department	Chickasaw Country	Nevada Indian Territory
Muckleshoot Tribe	Puyallup Tribe of the Puyallup Reservation	Vision Maker Media
Radisson Green Bay/Oneida Nation	Suquamish Tribe	<i>For the Cause Sponsors:</i>
Tribal Business Journal	Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians	Amerind Risk Management Corporation
Paragon Casino Resort	Choctaw Country	Amtrak Cascades
	Colorado Tourism Office	Denakkanaaga
	Inn of the Mountain Gods Resort and Casino	Oomingmak Musk Ox Producers Co-op

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 fifth annual Enough Good People Silent Auction and Awards Ceremony at the 2016 AITC in Tulalip, Washington. The silent auction raised \$5,065 for the AIANTA Scholarship Program. AIANTA thanks all artisans who contributed to the silent auction's success.

At the 2016 awards ceremony, AIANTA once again recognized the best of Indian Country Tourism with the following award winners:

TRIBAL DESTINATION OF THE YEAR
Icy Strait Point

BEST CULTURAL HERITAGE EXPERIENCE
Puye Cliffs

EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE
Tina Whitegeese with the Pueblo of Pojoaque

ENOUGH GOOD PEOPLE AWARD:
This year, AIANTA was proud to present Chief Bill John Baker, of the Cherokee Nation with the prestigious Enough Good People award, recognizing his strong partnership with AIANTA and his deep commitment to the preservation and sharing of American Indian culture through tourism.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Tylor Roth & Company PLLP Certified Accounts have audited the financial statements of American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association, Inc. as of and for the year ended September 30, 2016, and have issued our report thereon dated March 28, 2017, which contained an unqualified opinion on those financial statements. 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, 2016."

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

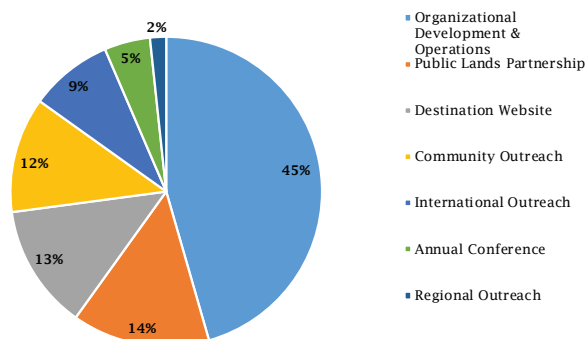
Auditee qualifies as a low risk auditee. A full financial report is available upon request.

AMERICAN INDIAN ALASKA NATIVE TOURISM ASSOCIATION INC. SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS

YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2016

Federal Grantor/ Pass-through Agency Program Title	Total Federal Expenditures
INDIRECT PROGRAMS	
<u>Department of Interior - BIA/DOT Cooperative Agreement</u>	
Organizational Development & Operations	\$ 479,055
Public Lands Partnership	150,305
Destination Website	136,750
Community Outreach	126,694
International Outreach	90,876
Annual Conference	50,000
Regional Outreach	17,582
Total indirect federal assistance	<u>1,051,262</u>
DIRECT PROGRAMS	
National Park Service	
Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program	<u>13,619</u>
Total Expenditures of Federal Awards	<u>\$ 1,064,881</u>

Department of Interior - BIA / DOT Agreement
Expenditures



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

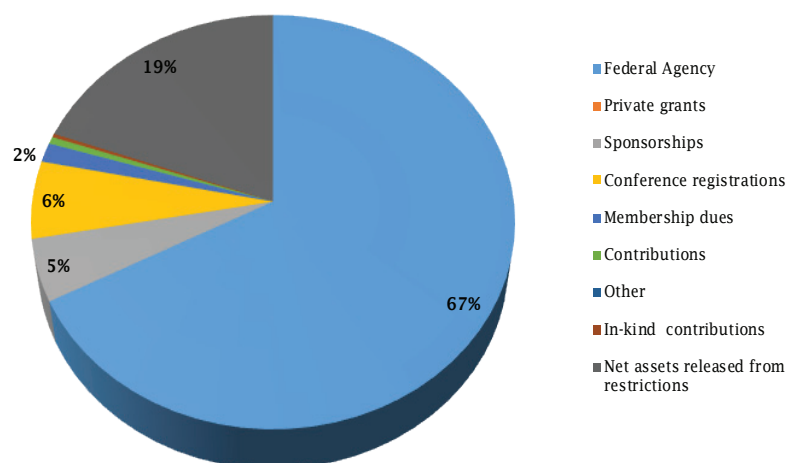
AMERICAN INDIAN ALASKA NATIVE TOURISM ASSOCIATION, INC.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2016

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Revenue and other support</u>			
Federal grants	\$1,064,881	\$	\$1,064,881
Conference registrations and fees	95,750		95,750
Sponsorships		76,500	76,500
Membership dues	23,941		23,941
Contributions	579	8,300	8,879
Private grants			
Other	12		12
In-kind contributions	4,333		4,333
Net assets released from restrictions	307,853	-307,853	
Total revenue and other support	1,497,349	-223,053	1,274,296
<u>Expense</u>			
Program services	1,201,142		1,201,142
Supporting services			
Management and general	187,250		187,250
Fund-raising	82,383		82,383
Total expense	1,470,775		1,470,775
Change in net assets	26,574	-223,053	-196,479
Net assets, beginning of year, originally restated	324,746	520,385	845,104
Restatements			
Net assets, beginning of year, restated	324,746	520,358	845,104
Net assets, end of year	\$351,320	\$297,305	\$648,625

2016 Federal Grants & Other Revenue



The Association's primary sources of funding are obtained through federal grants, making up approximately 67% of the total revenue. This is up compared to 2015 where total revenue from federal grants was 60%. The organization diversified funding sources obtaining 33% of funds for other projects.



AIANTA's FY2017 Board of Directors


Sherry L. Rupert, President, Southwest Region
Rachel Moreno, Vice President, Alaska Region
James Surveyor, Secretary, At-Large
Lora Ann Chaisson, Treasurer, Eastern Region
LaDonna Allard, Plains Region
Pohai Ryan, Pacific Region
Jamie Sijohn, Pacific Region
Jackie Dorothy, Plains Region
Mario Fulmer, Alaska Region
Travis Owens, At-Large
Crystal Holtz, Midwest Region
Sonja Tanner, Midwest Region
Emerson Vallo, Southwest Region

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
Shamaine Giannini, International Outreach Coordinator

AIANTA's FY2017 Consultants and Advisors

Edward Hall III, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Jana Prewitt, Legislative Consultant
Paul Moorehead, Legislative Consultant
Anna Barrera, Research & Website Development Consultant
Dan Moore, Agritourism Consultant
Lael Eckohawk, Legal Advisor
Wade Blackman, Legal Advisor
Julie Heizer, MDCP Advisor, U.S. Department of Commerce
Brad Hess, MDCP Advisor, U.S. Department of Commerce





AIANTA

American Indian Alaska Native
Tourism Association

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This report was funded through a cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Indian Affairs