



Tribal TANF Summit

August 31-September 1, 2015

Summary Report



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Overview

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Family Assistance (OFA), Division of Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Management hosted the *Tribal TANF Summit (Summit)* on August 31-September 1, 2015 at the Renaissance Washington D.C. Downtown Hotel in Washington, D.C. The Summit brought together Tribal TANF program administrators and tribal leaders to dialogue about key issues facing Tribal TANF programs. The Summit provided attendees with opportunities to engage with their peers and experts from the field to discuss best practices and the latest research, as well as to plan ways to improve TANF programming for low-income families in their communities. This report summarizes highlights from the *Tribal TANF Summit*.

Day One

Welcome and Tribal Opening

- **Nisha Patel**, Director, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- **Felicia Gaither**, Director, Division of Tribal TANF Management, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- **Lester Alford**, Tribal TANF Executive Director, Karuk Tribe of California

Felicia Gaither welcomed participants to the Summit and then introduced Lester Alford, who provided an opening prayer. Following Mr. Alford's opening, Nisha Patel welcomed participants, giving a special welcome to those attending their first Tribal TANF meeting. Ms. Patel discussed her recent trip to Alaska and the warm welcome from tribal community members there. Ms. Patel also mentioned the importance of people and place for Tribal TANF programs and how flexibility is vital in these programs. Ms. Patel expressed interest in hearing the stories behind statistics and highlighted the next day's listening session as an opportunity to give feedback to OFA leadership and team members. In reviewing OFA's priorities, Ms. Patel emphasized the importance of two-generation approaches to meeting the needs of families, the implementation of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and career pathways, and a focus on comprehensive case management. Ms. Patel encouraged participants to engage with experts and peers, to checkout the new OFA twitter account (@OFA_ACF) using the #TANF, and to have fun along the way.

Following Ms. Patel's remarks, Dr. Gaither introduced the OFA staff and encouraged participants to use the next two days to explore, dig deeper, and plant seeds for programs and services that can change lives. Dr. Gaither also encouraged participants to be open to "q-storming," like brainstorming but the idea is to develop questions. The best results begin with questions—they create new thinking and new possibilities. Dr. Gaither then gave an overview of the agenda and concluded the welcoming remarks.



WIOA Implementation in Tribal Areas and Investing in our Youth and the Community: Summer Youth Employment Programs in Indian Country

- **Amanda Ahlstrand**, Administrator, Office of Workforce Investment, Employment and Training Administration, United States Department of Labor
- **Matthew Barnes**, Program Services Director, California Tribal TANF Partnership

Moderator:

- **Stan Koutstaal**, Program Manager, Health Profession Opportunity Grants, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

During this session, Amanda Ahlstrand, a representative from the Department of Labor, discussed the rollout of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) and how it relates to tribal communities. The session also featured information on summer youth employment opportunities, including an example from the California Tribal TANF Partnership, a Tribal TANF program that has successfully engaged youth in employment.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA)

On July 22, 2014, legislators passed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) into law. On the same day, the Vice President released the report, *Ready to Work: Job-Driven Training and American Opportunity*. This report outlined the need for workforce programs to design training programs that meet local labor market needs, train people for jobs that exist, and provide opportunities for career advancement. WIOA, in alignment with this report, challenges workforce development programs to think differently and collaborate across agencies.

The vision for WIOA includes three hallmarks of excellence:

- 1. The needs of business and workers drive workforce solutions.** Job seekers are able to access the resources they need to secure employment and those resources align with the needs of the labor market.
- 2. One Stop Centers and other service providers provide excellent customer service and focus on continuous improvement.** To accomplish this, the U.S. Department of Labor will facilitate sharing promising practices and opportunities for improvement across programs.
- 3. The workforce system actively supports vibrant regional economies and plays an active role in community and economic development:** WIOA will provide opportunities to connect workforce development with economic development, including the use of entrepreneurship.

Among the key themes of WIOA is greater system alignment through partnerships with agencies such as TANF and Vocational Rehabilitation. Although the challenges of aligning programs with different objectives and performance measure are real, engaging in the difficult work of partnership could help develop a seamless service delivery system for clients.

Specific to American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian communities, WIOA Section 166 supports the educational, employment, and economic development goals of these communities. Funding for the WIOA Section 166 Youth program is available to tribes and nonprofit tribal organizations, while funding for the Adult program is only available to tribes. With the passage of WIOA, there are changes to the WIOA Section 166



programs, which include reducing the frequency of grant competitions (every four years rather than every two) allowing for the development of a four year plan. WIOA also creates a formal advisory council—the Secretary’s Native American Advisory Council—which meets twice per year.

When thinking about WIOA implementation, Tribal TANF programs should consider opportunities to engage with workforce programs to enhance service delivery to shared customers, problem solve around mutual challenges, and share existing successful approaches that can bolster program performance. To participate in technical assistance opportunities, such as communities of practice and virtual learning opportunities, visit: ina.workforce3one.org and www.wioa.workforce3one.org.

Summer Youth Employment

Summer youth employment programs provide several benefits to youth and their families, including improved self-confidence, exposure to opportunities for success, reduced TANF recidivism, financial independence, and a larger social support network. The California Tribal TANF Partnership (CTTP) is entering its third year of operating a summer youth employment in a 16-county area of California. The program began in 2015 as a pilot program in three counties, serving 14 youth. In 2015, they served 36 graduates in 12 counties.

Matthew Barnes, a program specialist with CTTP, provided an overview of how the program operates. In CTTP’s summer youth employment program, the youth is central and is surrounded by a support network that includes their caseworker, parents, career developers, and employers.

1. **Caseworker:** The caseworkers build relationships with youth and their families, providing them with valuable insight into what is happening with the family. They also provide a connection to necessary supportive services and plan graduation.
2. **Parents:** Their buy-in is an important part of the youth’s success in the program. Their responsibilities include ensuring that youth are on time, rested, and have reliable transportation to their jobs.
3. **Career Developers:** Each career developer represents five or six counties and is responsible for recruiting, training, and building relationships with employers for long-term engagement. Career developers also provide job skills training to the youth.
4. **Employers:** Employers who participate in the summer youth employment program benefit receive a subsidized employee for six weeks, who has received six months of training, and will receive on-going support throughout their period of employment. Employers can receive up to a \$10/hour subsidy, must pay the youth the same as others in their position, and should not fire any existing employees to accommodate the youth.

“I am very confident that with programs like this one, our youth can and will accomplish great goals, break standards, and bust through limitations that they always seem to face.”

–Employer Partner, Local Indians for Education Inc.

Although the period of employment for youth is six weeks during the summer, the process of recruiting, training, and placing youth in employment occurs throughout the year. Recruitment for the next summer’s cohort begins in August and ends in January when applications are due. In order to participate in the program, youth must be 15-18 years old, have a 2.0 GPA, and be available for the majority of the six-week employment period.



From January through April, the accepted youth participate in orientation, take the Motivational Appraisal of Personal Potential (MAPP) career assessment, and engage in soft skills training. In the next iteration of the program, the Tribe will add additional trainings that will cover interviewing and job-specific skills. In April 2015, the career developer recruited employers sign their work site agreements. During this same time, case managers work to process supportive service request—such as clothing allowances and transportation assistance—and match youth to the available job sites. The career developers work to align the interests of students and the skill requirements of employers as closely as possible during the matching process.

As part of the program, youth must prepare and interview with employers. If the employer believes the youth is a good match, they will proceed with signing the work site agreement. If not, there will be an interview debrief and the CTPP team will search for another job site for the student. In the middle of June, youth begin their summer employment that lasts through July or August. Case managers and career developers conduct evaluations every two weeks with the employers.

During that time, the case managers also consistently check in with the youth and their parents. At the end of the program, there is a graduation celebration and youth who successfully complete the program receive a \$100 graduation incentive. To graduate, a youth must have received two of three positive evaluations from their employer and have completed the six weeks of employment.

In 2015, 112 youth were eligible for the program. All 50 youth that applied were accepted, and 36 youth graduated the program. Eleven graduates received offers for unsubsidized employment with their summer employers. CTPP looks forward to continuing to grow the program, and will have 142 age eligible youth in 2016.



(From left to right) Mr. Barnes, Ms. Ahlstrand, and Stan Koutstaal (facilitator) discuss the implications for WIOA on TANF and other workforce development programs

Questions and Answers:

- **Question (for Mr. Barnes):** What is the funding for summer youth employment?
 - Answer: Only Tribal TANF funds.
- **Question (for Mr. Barnes):** Do you use labor market information or other data to decide on the employers you should pursue?
 - Answer: We try to match the employment opportunities with the interests of the youth because we want them to be excited.
- **Question (for Mr. Barnes):** How did you grow your program?
 - Answer: We decided to start small to get our processes in place. We are using our current staff, but giving them additional job responsibilities. They are engaged once they see how helping the youth impacts their overall work with families.
- **Question (for Ms. Ahlstrand):** How do you know if the most logical partner is a WIOA 166 grantee or a state or local workforce development board?



- Answer: There is information on the WIOA 166 grantees on the Web site. You can visit careeronestop.org to find the closest OneStop shop. You may also want to consider partnering with your local vocational rehabilitation organization or an educational agency to help develop strategies for career development and exploration.
- **Question (for Ms. Ahlstrand):** Are the performance measures different for Title I and WIOA 166 programs?
 - Answer: They are the same for both programs. The need to recognize skill gain and credentials has been feedback from WIOA 166 programs in the past, and this has been incorporated into the new performance measures.
- **Question (for Mr. Barnes):** What motivations do you use to get students focused on a future career?
 - Answer: During orientation we share success stories about students who have moved along a career pathway. One student began as an 18 year-old summer youth employment participant doing computer repair and has successfully advanced in this field. Career developers with backgrounds in case management also listen for student needs and try to find those opportunities in their summer employment placements.
- **Question (for Mr. Barnes):** Is budgeting part of the training for youth?
 - Answer: Yes, but this is something we are looking to expand on. We use a four-week budget-training program for adults and are looking for a way to transition this to the youth.
 - Answer (Ms. Ahlstrand): Under WIOA, financial literacy is part of the youth program requirements. We are looking to develop resources for this.
- **Question (for Ms. Ahlstrand):** Is there is an impending funding increase for WIOA Adult and Youth? In regards to performance measurements, how is that going to impact programs with increased collaboration? With the 2017 planning cycle, is there going to be increased funding?
 - Answer: The legislation does propose some levels of funding. WIOA sets a minimum level that needs to be proposed and passed. Currently, there are proposed funding level increases both in Title I and 166. The program has not seen increases in recent years.
 - We are still working to determine how performance measurements in the PY17 plan will work in terms of collaboration and partnerships.
 - States proposing combined plans for titles I, II, III, and IV programs would hopefully include TANF and other programs as partners, but we do not know what this will mean for program accountability yet. We need to figure out how to parse this information out to ensure we understand how the programs contributed to the success of participants.
- **Question (for Mr. Barnes):** Are the youth TANF youth? Do the youths' incomes impact the TANF grants of their families?
 - Answer: Yes, they are TANF youth, but their income does not impact their family's TANF grant.
- **Question (for Ms. Ahlstrand):** Who are the state labor board representatives?
 - Answer: Part of administering Title I is convening a workforce development board. There is one at the state level, and many others operating at the local level. These boards are smaller under WIOA, but it also encourages subcommittees around specific topics, such as youth. There is flexibility around having additional members and additional committees, but WIOA reduces the number of required representatives.
- **Question (for Ms. Ahlstrand):** What amount is available for WIOA 166 youth programs?



- Answer: There is a formula that determines the amount of funding tribes can apply for based on factors such as population and unemployment rates.
- **Question (for Mr. Barnes):** How do you handle case closures?
 - Answer: We have thought about this but it has not happened yet. We would close the case in instances of parental non-compliance. This is why the relationship with the parents is so important, and why we communicate non-compliance consequences up front.
- **Question:** There was a joint letter of collaboration between OFA and DOL released around serving young adults between 18 and 24. What are the dos and don'ts of serving that population?
 - Answer: You can use Tribal TANF funds for summer youth employment and there is flexibility around eligibility requirements. Regional staff can support you in developing the specifics, but any activities must be part of your plan.

What Can Tribes Do? Strategies and Institutions in American Indian Economic Development

- **Stephen Cornell**, Co-Director of the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development & Director, Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, University of Arizona
- **Joseph Nayquonabe**, Chairman of the Board and Commissioner of Corporate Affairs, Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures

Moderator:

- **Denise Litz**, Family Assistance Program Specialist, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



Tribal TANF Summit Participants within the Plenary Room

During this session, Dr. Stephen Cornell from the University of Arizona and Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development and Joseph Nayquonabe from Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures (MLCV) provided participants with insight and information on the link between governance and economic development as well as how Tribal TANF plays a role in this relationship.

Dr. Cornell began his presentation by discussing the two primary factors behind chronic and persistent poverty within Indian reservations: (1) Historical, social, and cultural issues that lead to “broken families” such as

high rates of substance abuse, youth suicide, poor nutrition, historical trauma, and domestic violence. While it is critical to address these issues and, quite simply, help families survive, the root cause of these barriers is predominantly due to the second factor driving poverty on tribal lands, (2) the lack of a productive, local economy. Policies and programs that intend to mitigate or remove the effects of poverty must not just address symptoms, such as substance abuse and violence, but focus also on rebuilding native economies and bringing about sustainable job and economic growth.



Historically the most important factor in failed native economies was not a lack of capital or assets; rather it was the absence of a governance environment that encouraged investment. In this case, investment is not exclusive to money, but includes time, talent, and ideas, as well as financial resources. People must believe in the ability of tribal government to bring about a prosperous future before they will contribute their energy and resources. Tribal governments build trust and belief when politics do not interfere with program management. Effective government bodies conduct action quickly and efficiently and make hiring/firing decisions based on merit, not local or family connections. While some tribes may elect to follow a western model of governance, others construct government structures based on indigenous values and traditions. Western or indigenous, members of the reservation must decide for themselves on which government model to follow. When considering which economic development strategy to follow, Dr. Cornell encouraged tribes to consider the question of “what do we want to be as a people”. In Dr. Cornell’s experience, too often tribes pursue economic development opportunities without considering if they are a match for what the tribe considers as culturally important. In closing, Dr. Cornell advised to pursue economic development but to “know why you’re doing it”.

Following Dr. Cornell’s presentation, Joseph Nayquonabe shared his experiences leading MLCV, an entity created by the tribal government of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, in developing and nurturing a wide range of business efforts in east-central Minnesota. Mr. Nayquonabe discussed the history of MLCV’s founding, from the vision of a tribal council chairman to found a self-sustaining business independent of politics to the current position of the company as a highly profitable entity conducting business in the areas of small businesses, gaming, marketing, and hospitality. Mr. Nayquonabe described how declining casino revenues motivated MLCV to transition to a more diverse investment portfolio. During this transition period, they attempted entering markets where they had minimal experience and expertise, such as bottled water and wind power. MLCV found that these types of investments put them in a situation where they had little power over decision-making. Following this discovery, the company reshaped their strategy to invest in areas that were both a cultural and technical fit – “things that the tribe knew” – such as hospitality (hotels and tourism) and small businesses designed to meet existing needs (printing and laundry). Mr. Nayquonabe also mentioned that working in areas of familiarity allowed them to create jobs faster and build stronger partnerships with their Tribal TANF program. MLCV’s collaboration with Mille Lacs Tribal TANF has become far more robust following this expansion of job opportunities and a renewed focus on self-sufficiency. MLCV holds monthly strategy meetings with the Tribal TANF leadership to match Tribal TANF participants to open job positions. MLCV also offers wage subsidies for participants and recently co-managed a job fair in partnership with Tribal TANF. In the last few years, MLCV documented a 333% increase in Tribal TANF participant placements.

Questions and Answers:

- **Question (for Dr. Cornell):** What impact do personal assets have in the larger scheme of economic development? How does a tribe encourage small business development?
 - Answer: Anything that adds to personal assets is part of the economic development process. For example, people use dividend checks from casino profits to start their own businesses. Financing though is a big obstacle. Some tribes have seen improved outcomes from supporting strong small business technical assistance programs.
- **Question (for Mr. Nayquonabe):** How do you keep employees happy and increase job retention?
 - Answer: We conduct surveys throughout the year in order to measure employee happiness. In addition, we hold an annual leadership conference where we bring in motivational



speakers and provide skill development training. Bottom line is that you need to invest money to keep employees happy. We subscribe to the “20/70/10 model” – recognize and reward your top performers (the “20%”), try to improve the performance of the “70%”, and work to help the bottom “10%” exit the company or find a better job fit.

- **Question (for Dr. Cornell and Mr. Nayquonabe):** What is the biggest economic development barrier in Indian country?
 - Answer (Dr. Cornell): Insufficient strategic clarity about what we are trying to create along with the lack of institutional thinking on how to get there.
 - Answer (Mr. Nayquonabe): The biggest problem is dependence on tribal government or other large institutions. Tribes need to renew their focus on becoming self-sufficient.

Peer Networking

Summit attendees had the opportunity to engage in small group dialogue with their peers around core issues facing Tribal TANF programs and Native communities. Participants were broken up to eight groups and experts led discussions at each table. Table topics included:

- Economic Development
- Summer Youth Employment and Job Creation
- Evaluation and Program Assessment
- Job Advancement/Development
- Health Insurance Marketplace
- Data Management and Performance Measurements
- Tribal TANF Success Stories

Following the networking opportunity, participants shared their “lessons learned” on sticky pads. The session provided a shared understanding of challenges facing Tribal TANF programs and tribal communities, and provided numerous strategies for addressing these challenges. The following is a selection of attendee-identified lessons learned:

- Insight into supporting the economic development of other nations.
- New ways to help clients remove barriers to become self-sufficient.
- Ideas for Summer Youth Employment.
- Data measurement in graphical detail is helpful. A great way to see how well the program is performing.
- I have learned that not all tribes have adopted technology because of traditional ways.
- Innovative small business/economic development ideas.
- How other tribes use databases to capture performance, events, and other success stories. Digital story telling was a good idea.
- I can write “other eligible youth” into Summer Youth Employment and use stipends to increase the number of youth served.
- The steps needed to rebuild native nations.

Successful Tools for Case Managers

- *Jodie Sue Kelly, Co-Founder, Cygnet Associates*

Moderator:



- *Liliana Hernandez, Program Specialist, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

Ms. Kelly's presentation focused on four major areas of effective case management; building participation in orientation, assessment and planning, goal setting, and effective case notes. According to Ms. Kelly, the central challenge of TANF programs is helping people become job ready. In order to achieve that goal, case managers need to be able to define and assess job readiness before they can help their clients develop a plan to become job ready.

Ms. Kelly's presentation focused on how to motivate people to want the services involved in TANF participation. She highlighted the differences between what she called "power tools," or threatening styles, and motivational strategies, which make people feel like they want to participate. According to Ms. Kelly, TANF programs have several key opportunities to build engagement, including orientation, follow-up, assessment, career planning, and case management. The key is to sell people on a long-term idea such as income improvement, rather than short-term messages such as getting a job or being in compliance.



Ms. Kelly meeting with participants after her session on tools for case managers

According to Ms. Kelly, this long-term focus on income improvement should begin in orientation. In order to emphasize this point, Ms. Kelly juxtaposed a boring orientation—one that listed off rules and regulations using complicated language, messages that are not relatable, and boring slides—with a fun, informative, motivational, and engaging orientation. The more enjoyable orientation includes getting acquainted with the client, allowing them to dream, tying the goals of TANF to their goals, and allowing time for questions, activities, and interaction. Ms. Kelly emphasized the importance of not overloading orientations with legislation

jargon, making the session about the customer and their income improvement, and using outcome oriented language. This allows customers to describe their own outcomes and build engagement with the system.

During her presentation, Ms. Kelly used a number of activities to demonstrate how to use motivational phrasing and the difference it makes when communicating with customers. She suggested that programs aim for a sixth grade reading level in their written materials, to avoid buzz words or industry terminology, and to always tie it back to the client. Ms. Kelly highlighted a number of ways that well-meaning workforce programs can reinforce low self-esteem, raise the psychological price of receiving services, and turn off potential clients. She included a list of words to banish from advertisements, websites, orientation, dialogue and plans:

- Barrier
- Disadvantage
- Drop Out



- Low-income
- Long-term unemployed
- Offender
- Felon
- Ex-offender

In the next portion of her presentation, Ms. Kelly discussed the value of assessments and the best way to gather information in order to promote job retention. Ms. Kelly's tips for structured interviewing included asking open-ended questions and leaving primarily "yes" or "no" questions for the self-assessment. Her presentation included examples of self-assessment questions and open question starters used in structured interviews. Ms. Kelly concluded her presentation by asking the audience to look at everything through the customer's standpoint in order to best engage participants and create better outcomes.

Day Two

Listening Session

Listening Panel:

- **Mark Greenberg**, Acting Assistant Secretary, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- **Lillian Sparks Robinson**, Commissioner, Administration for Native Americans, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- **Nisha Patel**, Director, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Moderator:

- **Felicia Gaither**, Director, Division of Tribal TANF Management, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Mark Greenberg opened the session by highlighting the progress that the Administration for Children and Families has made over the course of the administration, including strengthening listening, engagement, technical assistance, research, use of data, and responsiveness on policy questions. Mr. Greenberg pointed to the dramatic increase of attention to tribal issues reflected across ACF, in part due to the commitment of President Obama. He also thanked Lillian Sparks Robinson for reimagining the work of the Administration for Native Americans (ANA), which now works actively across ACF on policy development and technical assistance responsiveness.

The listening session provided tribes with an opportunity to voice their shared questions, comments, and concerns to ACF leadership on its vision to better serve the needs of Native American children, families, and communities. The following summarized comments were from tribes raising issues or questions during this session:

- **Association of Village Council Presidents:** It is difficult to provide services in such a large region. Because of the remoteness of many programs and participants, Tribal TANF works against itself – young folks in remote villages look at peers who are having children and see a source of revenue from TANF



because there are no jobs out there. We want to do some prevention programs to prevent folks from becoming welfare recipients. We can do a lot with TANF but sometimes my hands are tied because this young population is not yet TANF clients. How can we use TANF funds to do more prevention programs?

- **Owens Valley Career Development Center:** I appreciated the panel yesterday; the economic discussions are a prominent issue that TANF programs need to consider because part of what we do is working with families to train them for a job and an opportunity to engage in full employment. The challenge, though, is having sufficient means and funding available to achieve that. Resources are scarce so we need to resort to other areas of funding. As we go on, how much flexibility do we have with regard to providing services in the areas of economic development, education, and training? Success depends on us. How early do we want to start our programming? Even at the Head Start level, we would like to create a program that is seamless enough that kids will succeed beyond high school level and into college or a vocation, and ultimately, a career. My question is what limitations do we have or what “un-limitations” do we have to be able to program or reprogram some of our dollars into youth-focused career pathways? The whole point is to break the cycle of dependency and demonstrate that this program is truly successful. Thank you very much.
- **Tanana Chiefs Conference:** My question to the panel is what can ACF, OFA, and ANA do as far as supporting the position of tribes in Alaska relative to flexibility, especially during reauthorization discussions. My second point deals with access to data. ACF/OFA mandates that tribes and states report on over 180 fields of data for every client, every month. Having access to that data in a format we can use to manage our programs and take an evidence-informed look at what we are doing would be valuable. ACF does have an important role in providing more analysis of the data so everyone can have a strong picture of our performance. Finally, I have comments on the focus on prevention. We have had success collaborating with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), state troopers, law enforcement, and others to bring in youth from the villages to explore lucrative jobs available in public safety. These tours also give these agencies an opportunity to access a larger labor force.
- **Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes:** We have had TANF since 1996 and 477 since 1998 and have had flexibility of working between those programs that have helped us bring down unemployment. We have been very successful in getting people into work and training but people are starting to hit five-year limits. A working family is a stable family. What is the flexibility with the five-year limits?



(From left to right) Dr. Gaither, Mr. Greenberg, Ms. Patel, and Ms. Sparks Robinson respond to questions from Tribal TANF Summit participants



- **Southern California Tribal Chairmen’s Association:** Substance abuse affects seventy percent of Indian Country and you can see this without data. Our children are suffering from abnormal childhood experiences. It is a piece we need to put in our programs.
- **California Tribal TANF Partnership:** We are not competing with each other. Call other programs because that is where you will gain access to the best knowledge. Going alone often means making more mistakes than needed. We have a coalition in California and we convene four times a year to talk about best practices. Regional representatives also attend these meetings.
- **Tanana Chiefs Conference:** We are all trying to define the dynamics of toxic stress and trauma informed care. There may be some broad policy considerations regarding the flexibility of prevention services. You do not have to be poor to have toxic stress or to have undergone trauma. It is very frustrating to tribes when resources are available in one sector but not available to apply where and when needed. ACF could be instrumental in assisting tribes to develop the capacity to develop outcome measures, especially with prevention.

Building Tribal and State Relations

- **Anita Fineday**, *Managing Director, Indian Child Welfare Programs, Casey Family Programs*

Moderator:

- **Heather Zenone**, *Senior Advisor, Tribal Children, Children’s Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

During this session, Ms. Fineday discussed how shared goals for children and families can serve as the foundation for collaboration between child welfare and TANF. She began her presentation with an overview of Casey Family Programs, a foundation located in Seattle dedicated to reducing the number of children in foster care across the country. Since 2013, the country has seen a steady increase in the number of American Indian children entering foster care. According to Ms. Fineday, this is especially alarming as there is a direct relation between poverty and children entering foster care. In her experience, TANF and child welfare form an effective collaboration in helping end the cycle of poverty. She pointed to IV-E/TANF collaborations between tribes and state counterparts in Minnesota, Washington, and Wyoming as examples of such promising partnerships. In closing, she encouraged tribal members in the audience to “come to the table” in regards to upcoming child welfare federal finance.

Questions and Answers:

- **Statement (from Don Shircel, Tanana Chiefs Conference):** In interior Alaska, the Tanana Chiefs Conference has seen substantial success in using TANF dollars to assist relatives caring for children involved in child welfare.
- **Question:** Are there any updates on the new round of TANF/Child Welfare Coordination grants?
 - Answer: OFA is currently reviewing grant applications and hope to announce awards by the end of September 2015.



Building Tribal and State Relations Breakout Sessions

Regions VI, VIII, and IX

Moderators:

- **Anita Fineday**, *Managing Director, Indian Child Welfare Programs, Casey Family Programs*
- **Felicia Gaither**, *Director, Division of Tribal TANF Management, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

During this session, states, territories, and tribes in Regions VI, VIII, and IX shared their experiences with state and tribal coordination activities. Some best practices shared included:

- Conduct quarterly meetings with the state and tribe present;
- Find opportunities for state consultations with tribes around policy issues, before new policies are released;
- Develop a Tribal TANF coalition;
- Create a dedicated Tribal TANF team at the state;
- Appoint a tribal liaison, and giving that person the authority to act; and
- Make time to continue developing partnership relations.

The Tribal TANF programs in the state of **California** have a quarterly meeting with the state TANF agency to provide updates and share information. In the past, they have brought in other state and county entities to the quarterly meetings to share available resources with the tribes and to help facilitate linkages. The CalWORKs staff noted the importance of including tribes in statewide learning opportunities, such as the annual CalWORKs conference scheduled for December 2015. There are also opportunities to engage tribes in other statewide initiatives such as the Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool (OCAT), an intensive appraisal tool, a new housing program, and subsidized employment opportunities.

Prior to the quarterly meeting with the state, the Tribal TANF programs hold a California Tribal TANF coalition meeting where they share best practices and capitalize on the Tribal TANF network. Through the coalition meetings, the tribes are able to build consensus around issues they want to present to the state of California. It has been extremely valuable to have Region IX staff attend these meetings.

Arizona has six Tribal TANF programs that work closely with the Arizona Department of Economic Security. The governor has created a tribal liaison for each department and sub-department, although the liaisons on the sub-departments have a dual role. Tribes in Arizona also participate in quarterly meetings with the state.

New Mexico has a tribal liaison but many tribes feel that they do not have a strong partnership with that person. Other attendees shared that partnership is often difficult in the beginning, but partnerships with other tribes and the Regional Offices are critical when developing a new program.

In the past, the **Blackfeet Tribe** served anyone who was a member of a federally recognized tribe, but in 2007, they transferred this money back to the state of Montana. The Tribe currently only serves enrolled Blackfeet members. They invite state and local partners to present at their monthly program meetings to promote collaboration and resource sharing. The State of **Montana** recognizes that they are having more success working with some tribes than others. The Montana-based **Chippewa Cree Tribe** has received technical



assistance from the state on case management, is working to gain access to see Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicare data in the state database, and received a visit from the Governor during which they were able to share their concerns. The State of Montana has benefited from sustained gubernatorial leadership and a tribal liaison with the authority to get work done.

In response to the sharing that occurred, tribes indicated the desire to create a central repository of best practices and data to help them gather the information needed to justify their programs. The National Council of American Indians (NCAI) has a TANF task force and tribes may look to NCAI to lead up the development of this site.

Regions I, II, III, IV, V, VII, and X

Moderators:

- **Heather Zenone**, Senior Advisor, Tribal Children, Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

During this session, states, territories, and tribes in Regions I, II, III, IV, V, VII, and X shared their experiences with state and tribal coordination activities. Some best practices shared included:

- Having a tribal liaison on staff within state government; and
- Hold regularly schedule meeting between Tribal TANF and their state peers.

Establish a consistent message across tribes and states that participants have a choice in which TANF program they elect to enroll. States and tribes in **Wisconsin** and **Minnesota** highlighted various strategies for increasing collaboration. They discussed the importance of having a tribal liaison at the state government level that works exclusively on tribal relations and all TANF related issues impacting tribal communities. **Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians** also highlighted their efforts in holding quarterly meetings with staff from Minnesota to discuss issues related to funding, data sharing, and program partnerships. Red Lake agreed to follow-up with **Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe** to outline how they initiated these meetings and what a typical agenda contains. Tribes in Wisconsin also stressed the challenge of connecting with their non-tribal peers and ensuring there is no duplication of service since the state adopted a consortia model.

Tribes in **Washington** shared their challenges in managing TANF benefits in cases where an individual has dual-citizenship (state and tribal). Both states discussed issues of "messaging" – while the ultimate goal is to ensure engagement of families, regardless if they are tribal or not, some tribal members are wary of going to state TANF. While tribes in Washington prefer for the states to send participants back to the tribe, in many cases, the message relayed to these participants is that there only choice is Tribal TANF. Ultimately, the message relayed to participants should be they have a choice between state or Tribal TANF. **Alaska** confirmed that they relay this message of choice to their participants. Representatives also raised the issue of "choice" and sanctions. While the understanding was that participants sanctioned off Tribal TANF could still apply for state support – the fear among representatives was that this might undermine a tribe's authority. Tribal and state TANF staff agreed that this issue warranted further discussion after the Summit. Both state and Tribal TANF representatives agreed that they should expand their data sharing efforts in order to create a more complete picture of the state of TANF within their borders.



Appendix A

Agenda



2015 TRIBAL TANF SUMMIT AGENDA

AUGUST 31, 2015-SEPTEMBER 1, 2015 | WASHINGTON, DC

MONDAY, AUGUST 31, 2015

8:30 a.m.—9:00 a.m.

Welcome and Tribal Opening

***Nisha Patel**, Director, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

***Felicia Gaither**, Director, Division of Tribal TANF Management, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

***Lester Alford**, Tribal TANF Executive Director, Karuk Tribe of California*

9:00 a.m.—10:15 a.m.

WIOA Implementation in Tribal Areas and Investing in our Youth and the Community: Summer Youth Employment Programs in Indian Country

During this session, representatives from the Department of Labor will discuss the rollout of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) and how it relates to tribal communities. The session will also feature information on summer youth employment opportunities, including an example from a Tribal TANF program that has successfully engaged youth in employment.

***Athena Brown**, Division Chief, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Division of Indian and Native American Programs*

***Amanda Ahlstrand**, Administrator, Office of Workforce Investment, Employment and Training Administration, United States Department of Labor*

***Matthew Barnes**, Program Services Director, California Tribal TANF Partnership Administration*

Moderator:

***Stan Koutstaal**, Program Manager, Health Profession Opportunity Grants, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

10:15 a.m.—10:30 a.m.

BREAK



10:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

What Can Tribes Do? Strategies and Institutions in American Indian Economic Development

This session will provide tribes with insight and information on the link between governance and economic development as well as how Tribal TANF plays a role in this relationship. Dr. Stephen Cornell will discuss the experiences, findings, and guiding principles emerging from the work of the Harvard American Indian Economic Development organization in assisting tribes to develop policies and governance structures that support and drive economic development efforts. Mr. Joseph Nayquonabe will share his experiences leading the Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures, an entity created by the tribal government of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, in developing and nurturing a wide range of business efforts in east-central Minnesota. Mr. Nayquonabe will discuss the importance of diversification in economic development (both gaming and non-gaming ventures) and touch on his organization's connection to Tribal TANF.

***Stephen Cornell**, Co-Director of the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development & Director, Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, University of Arizona*

***Joseph Nayquonabe**, Chairman of the Board and Commissioner of Corporate Affairs, Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures*

Moderator:

***Denise Litz**, Family Assistance Program Specialist, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

12:00 p.m.—1:30 p.m.

LUNCH ON YOUR OWN

1:30 p.m.—3:00 p.m.

Peer Networking

Attendees will have the opportunity to engage in small group dialogue with their peers around core issues facing Tribal TANF programs and Native communities. Table topics will include:

- *Economic Development*
- *Summer Youth Employment and Job Creation*
- *Evaluation and Program Assessment*
- *Job Advancement/Development*
- *Health Insurance Marketplace*
- *Data Management and Performance Measurements*
- *Tribal TANF Success Stories*

Following the small group discussions, attendees will have the opportunity to share key lessons learned.

Moderator:



Lynn Carrier, Senior Associate, ICF International

3:00 p.m.—3:15 p.m.

BREAK

3:15 p.m.—5:00 p.m.

Successful Tools for Case Managers

Case managers are tasked with many functions in building a successful program. They must motivate, assess customers, write career plans, help customers become employed and follow-up post placement. This session will cover a variety of tools and strategies for helping case managers be efficient and effective.

Jodie Sue Kelly, Co-Founder, Cygnet Associates

Moderator:

*Liliana Hernandez, Program Specialist, Office of Family Assistance,
Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services*

5:00 p.m.

Informal Networking



TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2015

8:30 a.m.—8:45 a.m.

Day Two Welcome and Tribal Opening

Felicia Gaither, Director, Division of Tribal TANF Management, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Dennis Zotigh, Cultural Specialist, Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian

8:45 a.m.—10:00 a.m.

Listening Session

The listening session will provide tribes and states with an opportunity to voice their shared questions, comments, and concerns to Administration for Children and Families (ACF) leadership on its vision to better serve the needs of Native American children, families and communities.

Listening Panel:

Mark Greenberg, Acting Assistant Secretary, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Lillian Sparks Robinson, Commissioner, Administration for Native Americans, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Nisha Patel, Director, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Moderator:

Felicia Gaither, Director, Division of Tribal TANF Management, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

10:00 a.m.—10:50 a.m.

Building Tribal and State Relations

This session will highlight strategies for building coalitions as both states and tribes work toward the goals of building self-sufficiency and ensuring well-being for families. The panelists will discuss how shared goals for children and families can serve as the foundation for collaboration, and will share examples of successful tribal and state coalitions.

Lesia Evers, Tribal Relations Manager, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services

Anita Fineday, Managing Director, Indian Child Welfare Programs, Casey Family Programs

Moderator:



Stacey Ecoffey, Principal Advisor for Tribal Affairs, Immediate Office of the Secretary, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

10:50 a.m.—11:00 a.m.

BREAK

11:00 a.m.—11:45 a.m.

Building Tribal and State Relations Breakout Sessions

Federal staff and panelists from the Building Tribal and State Relations session will meet with tribal and state representatives grouped by Region to discuss strategies for successful coalition building around issues such as tribal consultation and child welfare. These smaller groups will allow tribes an opportunity to meet one-on-one with their state peers, as well as think about areas of potential technical assistance and guidance that would help them partner for better outcomes for children and families.

Regions I, II, IV, V, VII, and X

Moderators:

Stacey Ecoffey, Principal Advisor for Tribal Affairs, Immediate Office of the Secretary, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Lillian Sparks Robinson, Commissioner, Administration for Native Americans, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Regions VI, VIII, and IX

Moderators:

Lesia Evers, Tribal Relations Manager, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services

Anita Fineday, Managing Director, Indian Child Welfare Programs, Casey Family Programs

Heather Zenone, Senior Advisor, Tribal Children, Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

11:45 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

ADJOURN/LUNCH ON YOUR OWN

1:00 p.m.—1:15 p.m.

Opening Remarks—Gateway to Opportunity: Improving Parental Employment and Family Well Being Outcomes

1:15 p.m.—2:30 p.m.

Opening Plenary: Perspectives on Parental Employment and Family Well-Being



2:30 p.m.—2:45 p.m.	Break
2:45 p.m.—4:00 p.m.	TANF on the Horizon Legislative Panel
4:00 p.m.—4:15 p.m.	Break
4:15 p.m.—5:15 p.m.	Gateway Gabs
5:15 p.m.	Informal Networking



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES
Office of Family Assistance

2015 TribalTANF Summit
Summary Report

Appendix B

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