



June 20, 2023

ONAC Announces National Grant Awards in Support of Native Asset-Building Efforts

The Oklahoma Native Assets Coalition, Inc. (ONAC), a national Native-led nonprofit, announces that it awarded \$216,500 in invitation-only subgrants to twenty Native Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites during this recently-concluded tax season to assist them in providing Native-led tax preparation services for their tribal communities. The twenty grant awards represent the largest number of grant awards made in the country, during this tax season, by one grantor in support of Native VITA sites. As a national intermediary grant funder, ONAC was able to make these awards through the support of the **Wells Fargo Foundation** with additional funding from the **Bank of America Charitable Foundation**. To support this VITA initiative and ONAC's other programs, ONAC also received general operating resources from **The Kresge Foundation**, the **Target Foundation**, and **JPMorgan Chase & Co.** ONAC is grateful for this generous support and believes that funding Native VITA programs is a crucial piece of its efforts to provide integrated asset-building services in Native communities.

These grant awards are part of ONAC's ongoing coordination of the only nationally-focused Native Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)/Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Network. ONAC organizes this Network to provide resources and peer learning exchanges among Native VITA practitioners and related supporters throughout the country. As part of ONAC's coordination of the Network, ONAC serves on the national Taxpayer Opportunity Network (TON) Steering Committee and is in regular communication with IRS staff and other national entities working on EITC outreach and VITA. For those interested in joining the ONAC Native EITC/VITA Network, with coordination led by Patsy Schramm (Cherokee Nation) of ONAC, please complete the following online registration form: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ONACVITA>.

ONAC congratulates the following ONAC 2023 Native VITA mini-grant awardees on a successful tax season:

- Cherokee Nation Commerce Services (Tahlequah, Oklahoma)
- Community Development Financial Institution of the Tohono O'odham Nation (Sells, Arizona)
- Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe (Fallon, Nevada)
- Four Bands Community Fund, Inc. (Eagle Butte, South Dakota)
- Four Directions Development Corporation (Orono, Maine)
- Lakota Funds (Kyle, South Dakota)
- Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation (Mashantucket, Connecticut)



- People's Partner for Community Development (Lame Deer, Montana)
- Pueblo of Acoma Housing Authority (Pueblo of Acoma, New Mexico)
- Sitting Bull College (Fort Yates, North Dakota, and McLaughlin and Mobridge, South Dakota)
- Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation (Fort Hall, Idaho)
- Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohican Indians (Bowler, Wisconsin)
- The Chickasaw Nation (Ada, Oklahoma)
- The Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin (Keshena, Wisconsin)
- The Muscogee Nation (Okmulgee, Oklahoma)
- Tlingit Haida Regional Housing Authority (Juneau, Alaska)
- Warm Springs Community Action Team (Warm Springs, Oregon)
- White Earth Investment Initiative (Ogema, Minnesota)
- White Mountain Apache Housing Authority (Whiteriver, Arizona)
- Ysleta del Sur Pueblo (El Paso, Texas)

With support from the Wells Fargo Foundation, ONAC also awarded \$9,500 in additional funding to the following grantees in support of their Native asset-building programs:

- Osage Financial Resources, Inc. (Pawhuska, Oklahoma)
- People's Partner for Community Development (support of Children's Savings Accounts) (Lame Deer, Montana)

Since 2014, ONAC has awarded a total of eighty-five grants (\$663,900 total) to tribes and Native nonprofits in support of their asset-building programs. Grant awards have been made in Alaska, Arizona, Connecticut, Idaho, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, and Wisconsin. As additional resources are secured, ONAC will continue to expand grant support in other states. ONAC appreciates the partnerships with these grantees and all their work to build assets in Native communities.

The importance of Native VITA programs:

Native VITA services are crucial as the tax preparation is offered by trusted sources in local Native communities. For those without broadband access and affordable devices on which to complete online tax returns, in-person Native VITA services help tribal citizens to claim their tax credits and to use tax time as asset-building time. ONAC will receive the data reports from the 2023 grantees this fall (as some offer year-round VITA services). To convey the impact of Native VITA services, ONAC can report on the data from sixteen grantees in 2022. **Those sixteen ONAC grantees served 9,358 tribal citizens and helped them claim \$19,823,282 in federal tax refunds. Of those 9,358 tribal citizens, 3,195 individuals claimed \$6,361,038 through the EITC and 2,015 families claimed \$4,225,714 through the Child Tax Credit (CTC).**

About the Oklahoma Native Assets Coalition, Inc.:

The Oklahoma Native Assets Coalition (ONAC), started in 2001, is a national Native-led nonprofit that works with tribes and partners interested in establishing asset-building initiatives and programs in Native communities, for the purpose of creating greater opportunities for economic self-sufficiency of tribal



citizens. ONAC is an intermediary funder, grassroots network coordinator, and also a direct service provider that works with Native families to build their assets through ONAC's provision of Native-specific financial education and financial coaching, as well as funding of Children's Savings Accounts (CSAs), Emergency Savings Accounts (ESAs), down payment assistance, incentivized Bank On accounts, and emergency cash assistance. Soon, ONAC will launch a revolving loan fund.

The mission of ONAC is to build and support a network of Native people who are dedicated to increasing self-sufficiency and prosperity in their communities through the establishment of integrated and culturally relevant financial education and financial coaching initiatives, as well as seed-funded account programs, down payment assistance, EITC outreach, free tax preparation, expanded banking access, and other asset-building strategies.

Asset-building programs often simultaneously address family economic security, food sovereignty, financial literacy, and preservation of Native languages and arts. ONAC believes strongly in the importance of creating programming that incorporates Native worldviews, traditions, arts, and languages into Native asset-building efforts.

For further information:

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