



Greetings from Acting U.S. Attorney Scott Erik Asphaug

As we approach the end of 2021 and with National Native American Heritage Month having just concluded, it is fitting that we take time to reflect on a year of hard work and partnership in Indian Country.

Since taking office in January 2021, the Biden-Harris Administration has taken many [historic steps](#) to support Tribal communities. These efforts are built on a foundation of respect for Tribal sovereignty and self-governance and the honoring of federal trust and treaty responsibilities.

On October 29th, President Biden issued a moving [statement proclaiming](#) November 2021 as National Native American Heritage Month. This proclamation called on all Americans to “celebrate the countless contributions of Native peoples past and present and honor the influence they have had on the advancement of our Nation.” It further recognized and acknowledged that throughout our history, as a country, we have fallen short many times in living up to our founding ideal that all of us, Native peoples included, are created equal and deserve equal treatment, dignity, and opportunity.

Members of our U.S. Attorney’s Office Indian Country team watched with excitement and anticipation as the White House hosted its first annual Tribal Nations Summit on November [15th](#) and [16th](#). This event included many distinguished speakers and representatives from tribes across the U.S. Together, attendees and viewers discussed and evaluated strategies for how the federal government can invest in and continue to strengthen our nation-to-nation relationship and ensure that progress in Indian Country endures for many years to come.

2021 was a particularly busy year for the U.S. Attorney’s Office. We worked with Oregon tribes and federal partners on a whole host of law enforcement and public safety issues. We prosecuted cases from Warm Springs, Umatilla, and the Burns Paiute tribes; worked on the transitioning of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians to federal law enforcement jurisdiction; encouraged and supported the Klamath Tribes establishment of a tribal police department; and published our district’s first Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) program report, to name a few. We’re grateful for all our Tribal partners for their work on these important issues.

As we approach the new year, the U.S. Attorney's Office reaffirms our commitment to maintaining and strengthening our long-held relationships with Tribal leaders and communities across Oregon. Pursuing justice on behalf of Tribal communities and victims of crime will always be a top priority for this office. That will never change. Our Indian Country team is full of passionate, highly-qualified public servants eager to build and sustain strong, healthy, and safe native communities.

To conclude, I'd like to ask each of you to join me in remembering and holding space for the tribal members and leaders who we have lost this year. Those lost leave large voids in their families and communities. We remember each of them and honor their legacy by approaching the future and our work with eagerness and tenacity. Pursuing Tribal equity and justice is a multi-generational effort. We stand on the shoulders of those who've come before us.

I wish each of you the happiest of holiday seasons and a joyful New Year. We hope to see you soon in 2022.

Sincerely,

Scott Erik Asphaug

Acting U.S. Attorney

District of Oregon



In the News

President Joe Biden became the first United States President to issue a [proclamation](#) commemorating Indigenous Peoples' Day, which was followed by a variety of significant events and actions celebrating Native American Heritage Month.

- On November 15-16, the White House conducted a two-day Tribal Nations Summit which included tribal leaders talking about issues and concerns related to Indian Country. The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation Board of Trustees Chair Kat Brigham participated in the Tribal Rights and Sacred Lands Panel. The Summit can be viewed on YouTube ([Summit Day One](#) and [Summit Day Two](#)).
- On November 15, the President signed an [Executive Order](#) on Improving Public Safety and Criminal Justice for Native Americans and Addressing the Crisis of Missing or Murdered Indigenous People.
- On November 15, the White House also released a document highlighting some of the achievements to date in an effort to build a new era of [Nation-to-Nation engagement](#).
- The USAO [joined in the recognition](#) of National Native American Heritage Month.

The U.S. Senate confirmed Chuck F. Sams III as the first Native American to serve as director of the National Park Service in its 105-year history. Sams is a member of the Cayuse and Walla Walla tribes, which are part of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (Read [OPB's](#)

[story](#)). In addition, the Senate confirmed Bryan Newland, a member of the Bay Mills Indian Community, to be the assistant secretary overseeing Indian Affairs at the Interior Department (Read [The Detroit News' story](#)).

The Department of Justice awarded more than \$177 million to improve public safety and serve crime victims in American Indian and Alaska Native communities. More than \$73 million was awarded to 84 different Tribal communities and commissions under the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation (CTAS) which included \$3.5 million awarded to three Oregon tribes and one Oregon tribal commission: the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, the Coquille Indian Tribe, the Klamath Tribes, and the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. The COPS Office also awarded \$400,000 to Western Oregon University to develop a structured and Tribal-centered approach to enhancing the criminal justice system's ability to address the tragic and ongoing trend of missing and murdered indigenous persons (MMIP). The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) awarded an additional \$104 million to more 140 tribes and Tribal programs across the country—including two Oregon tribes—under the Crime Victims Fund Tribal Victim Services Set-Aside program. The Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians and the Klamath Tribes will each receive \$387,817 to fund culturally-appropriate victim services to meet the needs of their communities. [Read more](#).

National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) President Fawn Sharp became the first tribal leader elected exclusively by tribal citizens to receive diplomatic recognition from the United States. The U.S. Department of State credentialed NCAI President Sharp as a delegate during the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26). [Click here](#) for NCAI's statement.

Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland formally declared “squaw” to be a derogatory term and ordered a task force to find replacement names for valleys, lakes, creeks and other sites on federal lands that use the word. Read [OPB's story](#).

The Supreme Court of the United States will consider whether the Fifth Amendment's Double Jeopardy Clause precludes a defendant from being convicted of federal offenses in U.S. district court if he was previously convicted of tribal offenses in a regulatory court established by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Following a violent sexual assault within the Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservation, the defendant was convicted of assault and battery in the Court of Indian Offenses of the Ute Mountain Ute Agency; six months later, he was charged with and convicted of aggravated sexual abuse in Indian Country, stemming from the same conduct, in federal district court. The Tenth Circuit rejected the Defendant's double jeopardy argument, and the Supreme Court has accepted cert. See [Denezpi v U.S.](#)

Recent Prosecution Highlights from the USAO District of Oregon

- **US v Danny Snapp**- AUSA Jeff Sweet participated in a sentencing hearing on November 15 in a case involving illegal possession of a gun on the Burns Paiute Reservation. Danny Snapp was sentenced to 24 months in prison for possessing a shotgun with an obliterated serial number. The crime came to light after police responded to a reported domestic violence incident in September 2020. In addition to possessing the shotgun, Snapp admitted to law enforcement that he fired a revolver in the air to get his ex-wife to leave. Snapp was also prosecuted and convicted of crimes arising from this incident in Burns Paiute Tribal Court. [Read more](#).
- **US v Royce Francis Speedis** - AUSA Pam Paaso participated in a sentencing hearing on December 1 in a case involving assault with a deadly weapon and distribution of drugs on the Umatilla Reservation. Royce Francis Speedis was sentenced to 77 months in federal prison and three years' supervised release. [Read more](#).
- **U.S. v Skylar Crowe** – AUSA Jaclyn Jenkins indicted this case related to a homicide on the Umatilla Reservation. Skylar Faith Crowe was charged with Murder in the First Degree in the stabbing death of Richard Higheagle. [Read more](#).

News In Oregon

The Department of Justice has selected an additional 12 federally recognized tribes to participate in the expansion of the Tribal Access Program (TAP) for National Crime Information, a program that provides tribal governments with means to access, enter, and exchange data with national crime information systems, including those maintained by the FBI Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division and the states. Two of the tribes added were from the District of Oregon- the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation and the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians. [Read more.](#)

The Cow Creek Tribe continues its development of a Tribal Police Department and strengthening its partnership with the Douglas County Sheriff's Office. [Read more.](#)

In the State of Oregon, the second Monday in October will now officially be recognized as Indigenous Peoples Day. The State Legislature overwhelmingly approved a bill declaring October 11 to be Indigenous Peoples Day. The State of Oregon joined a variety of other states that celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day. Read news coverage in [USA Today](#) and on [CNN](#).

The Native American Youth and Family Center is hosting a mini [Native Made Pop-up](#) in Portland on December 11 and 12 in partnership with Indigenous Marketplace.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) Information

In November 2019, the Department of Justice launched a national strategy to address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) that included the hiring of MMIP coordinators to serve with U.S. Attorney's Offices. In June 2020, Cedar Wilkie Gillette became the District of Oregon's MMIP Coordinator. In this edition, MMIP Coordinator Wilkie Gillette provides an update on the MMIP Symposium held in September, an Oregon Public Radio interview, and a strategy regarding Gender Equity.

- The DOJ National Advocacy Center held a three-day virtual MMIP Symposium from September 14-16. It provided an update on the National Indian Country Training Initiative, Operation Lady Justice, MMIP Data, Developing Tribal Community Response Plans for Missing Persons Cases, and various breakout sessions.
- On October 19, MMIP Coordinator Cedar Wilkie Gillette had an interview with Oregon Public Broadcasting's All Things Considered to discuss Oregon's involvement in the national MMIP Initiative. Listen to [OPB's story](#).
- On October 22, The White House created a National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality that includes MMIP. Read more at [Whitehouse.gov](#).

MMIP Coordinator Cedar Wilkie Gillette can be contacted at (541) 465-6045 or Cedar.Wilkie.Gillette@usdoj.gov.

Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) Information

The Office for Victims of Crime, Tribal Grants Division provides an update on the funding issued under the FY 2021 OVC Tribal Victim Services Set-Aside Program:

OVC Awards Funding under the FY 2021 Tribal Victim Services Set-Aside Program

Congress first created a tribal victim services set-aside (TVSSA) from the Crime Victims Fund, which is administered by the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) in the fiscal year (FY) 2018 budget. The amount of the first set-aside was 3 percent, which totaled about \$133 million in FY 2018, that

was “available to the Office for Victims of Crime for grants, consistent with the requirements of the Victims of Crime Act, to Indian tribes to improve services for victims of crime.”

Congress authorized subsequent tribal set-asides of \$167.65 million in 2019; \$132.50 million in 2020; and \$100.75 million for 2021. OVC consulted tribal leaders each year on how to disburse the funds to their communities. In FY 2020, OVC established the TVSSA formula program, which distributed the set-aside funds using a population-based formula.

After consultation with tribal leaders in November 2021, OVC retained many of the features of the FY 2020 TVSSA program, including noncompetitive distribution of set-aside funds based on population; and a two-phase process that allows OVC to calculate grant awards based on the number of tribes that intend to apply.

OVC made additional changes to the TVSSA Formula program in 2021 to increase the discretion tribes have in using their tribal victim services set-aside funds to serve victims as their communities deem appropriate. For example, supplies necessary to support victim participation in traditional/cultural therapeutic practices (sweat lodges, smudging, and crafting supplies, etc.) and food as part of cultural/traditional activities reasonably incorporated into victim services are explicitly allowable expenses in FY 2021 TVSSA awards. Additionally, TVSSA awards may now be up to 60 months long.

All federally recognized tribes were eligible to participate in the FY 2021 Tribal Victim Services Set-Aside Formula program, regardless of when they last received set-aside awards, and regardless of the project periods of those awards. Eligible applicants were invited to submit a population certification in March 2021 to allow OVC to run the formula to determine allocations for each eligible applicant. Applicants were then invited to submit a full application, including a project narrative and budget, by June 14, 2021. Project narratives were accepted in any one of three formats: (1) as a traditional project narrative; (2) as checklist (template provided in the solicitation); or (3) created via an interview with OVC staff who documented the information.

OVC received FY 2021 population certificates from 173 federally recognized Tribes, but only 76 of the eligible applicants met the June 14, 2021 deadline, so it was extended to July 14, 2021. OVC staff and staff members from OVC’s Tribal training and technical assistance providers conducted outreach to the remaining applicants to identify and resolve barriers to submitting their applications. As a result of their efforts, additional applicants submitted their applications in JustGrants. Additionally, some of the applicants notified OVC of their desire to withdraw their applications. Unfortunately, OVC did not receive any response from a number of the applicants, despite repeated attempts to reach them by both phone and email.

After consulting with Tribal Leaders and designees on July 29, 2021, to discuss how these unclaimed funds should be distributed, OVC opted to distribute the unclaimed TVSSA formula funds across the Tribes who submitted applications. Funds were distributed using a population-based formula, as suggested by the Consultation participants who offered oral or written testimony.

Of the \$100.75 million set-aside for 2021, OVC awarded over \$90.32 million (\$90,321,186) to 142 tribes through the formula program. The funds can be used for many purposes, including the development, enhancement, and implementation of victim service programs; strategic planning; and needs assessments. Funds may also cover shelter and transitional housing services; crisis abuse intervention; legal services; medical and dental care; mental health care; transportation; and education and employment readiness activities.

Through the remaining set-aside funds, OVC:

- Supports Tribal grantees with capacity building, training and technical assistance (\$6.8 million) through the Tribal Set-Aside Training and Technical Assistance Program, the Tribal Financial Management Center, and the Human Trafficking Capacity Building Center;
- Updates the Tribal Resource Tool (\$199,999), which maps the availability of victim services in Tribal communities;

- Contributes to the Tribal Access Program (\$420,000);
- Conducts the next National Indian Nations Conference (\$680,796);
- Transfers funding to the Bureau of Indian Affairs to support the Federal Crime Victim Assistance Fund (\$30,000) and Victim Specialist positions (more than \$1.7 million); and
- Provides funding to the Bureau of Justice Assistance to support Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation Purpose Area 2 (\$250,000) and Tribal construction contracts (\$251,332).

Visit [OVC's website](#) for additional information about the set-aside program and other initiatives that enhance services for victims of crime in tribal communities. You can also learn more about the 17th National Indian Nations Conference—scheduled for December 6–9, 2022—which will have in-person and virtual components and register to receive [News From OVC](#).

Upcoming Training and Events

Please note that these dates and venues may change due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please check with the individual sponsoring agency for updates and confirmation.

Please note that these dates and venues may change- please check with the individual sponsoring agency for updates and confirmation.

All trainings are sponsored by the National Criminal Justice Training Center (NCJTC).

[Tribal Probation Academy](#) (Live Training, January 16-May 23, 2022).

[Building Better and Stronger Tribal Justice Systems](#) (Previously-recorded webinar)

[Building AMBER Alert in Indian Country](#) (Self-paced webinar)

[Public Education on Registered Sex Offenders and Sexual Offending for Tribal SORNA Programs](#) (Previously-recorded webinar)

[The Role of the United States Marshals Service for Tribes Implementing SORNA](#) (Previously-recorded webinar)

[Tribal SORNA 101](#) (Previously-recorded webinar)

[Vicarious Trauma in Tribal Organizations](#) (Previously-recorded webinar)

[Integrated Tribal Domestic Violence Court](#) (Previously-recorded webinar)

[Mobile Advocacy in Tribal Communities](#) (Previously-recorded webinar)

[Tribal Remedies for Violation of Domestic Violence Protection Orders](#) (Previously-recorded webinar)

[Tribal Law Enforcement Recruitment and Retention: Successful Strategies](#) (Previously-recorded webinar)

[Youth Engagement Strategies: Fostering Development of Tomorrow's Tribal Criminal Justice Leaders](#) (Previously-recorded webinar)

Funding Opportunities

Broadband Access: The Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program is a \$268 million grant program to build the broadband and digital technology capacities of our nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs), and to support broadband access, adoption, and digital skills within those institutions and in their surrounding anchor communities. All applications must be submitted by December 1, 2021. [Read more.](#)

HHS Domestic Violence Prevention Program: The Indian Health Service (IHS) is accepting applications for grants for the Domestic Violence Prevention (DVP) program, formerly known as the Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative (DVPI). The purpose of this IHS grant is to support the development and/or expansion of a DVP program by incorporating prevention efforts addressing social, spiritual, physical, and emotional well-being of victims through the integration of culturally appropriate practices and trauma-informed services for Tribes, Tribal organizations, and Urban Indian organizations (UIO) serving the AI/AN population. Applications must be submitted by February 2, 2022. [Read more.](#)

For more information regarding federal funding opportunities see the [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP); [Office on Violence Against Women](#) (OVW); the [Office of Community Oriented Policing Services](#) (COPS) (<https://cops.usdoj.gov/>); and the [Office for Victims of Crimes](#) (OVC).

Indian Land Tenure Foundation grants supporting Education, Cultural Awareness, Economic Opportunity, and Legal Reform: ILTF serves Indian Country in the recovery and control of rightful homelands. The organization makes grants to Indian nations and nonprofit organizations for land-related initiatives in four areas: education, cultural awareness, economic opportunity, and legal reform. *Letters of inquiry accepted on an ongoing basis.* [Learn more.](#)

Kalliopeia Foundation's cultural and ecological renewal projects rooted in reverent connection to a sacred, living Earth: The foundation supports, connects, and lifts up extraordinary projects and leaders who are modeling powerful ways to reconnect ecology, culture, and spirituality. They find most of their grantee partners through networks, field research, and at gatherings, and accept proposals by invitation only. If you feel your work is strongly aligned with their mission, you can send a brief email telling them about your work. *Letters of inquiry accepted on an ongoing basis.* [Learn more.](#)

Northwest Area Foundation's Access to Capital, Work Opportunity, Enterprise Development, and Financial Inclusion grants: The Northwest Area Foundation supports organizations anchored in the culture of the people they serve and dedicated to expanding economic opportunity for Native communities, communities of color, immigrants, refugees, and rural communities. Their funding advances good jobs and financial capability through four portfolios of grantmaking: Access to Capital, Work Opportunity, Enterprise Development, and Financial Inclusion. *Letters of inquiry accepted on an ongoing basis.* [Learn more.](#)

W.K. Kellogg Foundation: Numerous grant opportunities providing funding for Indigenous communities. Focus areas of interest include educated kids, healthy kids, secure families, racial equity, and community/civic engagement. *Application deadlines vary per grant.* [Learn more.](#)

What We're Watching and Reading

With the celebration of Native American Heritage Month, I had an opportunity to re-watch the OPB documentary [Broken Treaties](#). The Broken Treaties documentary examines the history of Oregon's native peoples and includes interviews of several Tribal leaders from tribes in Oregon. If you have time, it is worth watching.

Today, women serve in police departments throughout Indian Country, as patrol and corrections officers, detectives, and other roles. See [this article](#) for a discussion of how women are leading the way in tribal law enforcement.

Some coastal tribes in Oregon are working to bring sea otters back to their communities. Read [OPB's coverage](#).

In Oregon, you are seeing partnerships between organizations and tribes to promote Native American land access and cultivation of traditional foods. Read the [Oregonian's coverage](#).

If you're interested in seeing how Native Americans have influenced and shaped rock and roll music, check out [Rumble: The Indians Who Rocked the World](#).

With the pandemic still impacting our ability to gather and travel, you can check out the virtual museum exhibits at the Five Oaks Museum (physically located on PCC's Rock Creek Campus in Portland). The virtual exhibits include [Untouchable Artifacts: A Virtual and Printed Exhibition on Indigenous Storytelling, History, and Resilience](#)—an exhibition featuring eleven Indigenous artists discussing the importance of Indigenous storytelling.

FX on Hulu has an interesting series titled "[Reservation Dogs](#)" which follows four Native American teenagers depicting their experiences on their reservation in rural eastern Oklahoma. The series is directed by Native filmmaker Sydney Freeland and written by Sterlin Harjo and Taika Waititi. Season 1 was entirely filmed on the Muscogee (Creek) Nation reservation in Okmulgee, Oklahoma.

If you are interested in the impact of COVID on the Tribal jail population, the Bureau of Justice Statistics released [a report](#) in October.

U.S. Attorney's Office Indian Country Team

Organized and Violent Crime Chief AUSA Craig Gabriel

Organized & Violent Crime Deputy Chief AUSA Natalie Wight

AUSA Tribal Liaison [Tim Simmons](#) [*All 9 federally recognized tribes & Chemawa Indian School*]

AUSA [Jaclyn Jenkins](#) [*CTUIR & Chemawa Indian School*]

AUSA [Pam Paaso](#) [*Warm Springs*]

AUSA [Jeff Sweet](#) [*Burns Paiute and Cow Creek*]

Tribal Victim Assistance Specialist [Ella LeVally](#)

MMIP Coordinator [Cedar Wilkie Gillette](#)

Law Enforcement and Community Outreach Coordinator [Erin Greenawald](#)

Public Affairs Officer [Kevin Sonoff](#)



A Note About Our Language

"Indian Country" is the legal term used to describe reservations and other lands set aside for Indian use, such as Indian allotments and lands held in trust for Indians or Indian tribes, and is defined under 18 U.S.C. § 1151. We use the term Indian Country versus the term Native American or some other term because it describes the statutory jurisdiction of the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Disclaimers

The links provided in this newsletter are for information only. Not all content reflects the views of the U.S. Attorney's Office or Department of Justice. Events and trainings are not vetted or otherwise endorsed by the USAO or DOJ.

Please do not reply to this email. This mailbox is for outbound messages only. So that we may best serve you, please visit our website at <https://www.justice.gov/usao-or>

You have received this email because you are a partner of the U.S. Attorney's Office and we have identified you as someone who may be interested in updates about our Indian Country program. If you would like to edit your subscription settings or unsubscribe, please click [here](#).

Please consider forwarding this email to interested contacts. Click [here](#) to register new subscribers.

This newsletter is brought to you by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Oregon Indian Country (IC) Program.

If you have questions or content suggestions, please email USAOR.ICNews@usdoj.gov or call (503) 727-1000.