

NUIFC Press Release: The National Council of Urban Indian Health Joins An Unprecedented National Coalition For Census & Civic Engagement Work In All Native Communities

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SEATTLE, WA — The National Urban Indian Family Coalition (NUIFC) is excited to welcome the National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) to a national coalition of Native organizations working collaboratively on a robust, unprecedented civic engagement initiative focused on ensuring an accurate Census count and empowering hundreds of thousands Native voters in communities on and off the reservation.

“We have so much at stake and we’re taking extraordinary efforts to make sure our voices are heard in the most important election and Census of our lifetime,” says Janeen Comenote, NUIFC Executive Director. “The addition of NCUIH to our already powerful coalition of urban Indian organizations both locally and nationally strengthens our collective ability to impact the body politic in the U.S.”

“It is of paramount importance that we ensure that American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) living in urban settings are civically engaged, exercising their rights and raising their voices. As this is the first time ever that NCUIH has been awarded funds to focus on Census and Voting initiatives at the national level, we are encouraged to see attention given to urban AI/AN mobilization to positively impact and educate decision makers and the general public on our reality and challenges especially amid a global pandemic that is ravaging our communities.”

— FRANCYS CREVIER, NCUIH’S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

NCUIH joins an impressive list of national Native organizations including, the National Congress of American Indians, the Native American Rights Fund, Urban Indian Health Institute, the Center for Native American Youth, and the NUIFC. The addition of the NCUIH rounds out a full geographic footprint both on and off the reservation in Indian Country.

“NCUIH is thrilled to partner with the National Urban Indian Family Coalition (NUIFC) and the Wallace H. Coulter Foundation on a critically important census and civic engagement initiative for Urban Native Americans,” says Alejandro Bermudez Del-Villar, NCUIH’s Programs & Development Director. “It is of paramount importance that we ensure that American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) living in urban settings are civically engaged, exercising their rights and raising their voices. As this is the first time ever that NCUIH has been awarded funds to focus on Census and Voting initiatives at the national level, we are encouraged to see attention given to urban AI/AN mobilization to positively impact and educate decision makers and the general public on our reality and challenges especially amid a global pandemic that is ravaging our communities.”

NCUIH was formed in 1998 to support the development of quality, accessible, and culturally competent health services for American Indians and Alaska Natives living in urban communities. Today, NCUIH works in partnership with more than 40 urban Indian organizations offering quality, accessible, and culturally sensitive health care programs in their community and are a trusted institution in Indian country.

To this end, NCUIH will conduct online civic education through multiple platforms, invest into Urban Indian Health Organizations to engage in community engagement around the Census and election, and work directly with its youth council to foster civic participation among young Natives.

In 2018, the NUIFC launched the first ever national urban American Indian & Alaska Native Civic Engagement initiative, which was an overwhelming success and contributed to the election of the country's first two Native American Congresswomen. This year NUIFC has steadily grown this national coalition with the primary goal of supporting an even larger network of Urban Indian organizations as they build political power and ensure an accurate Census count. With more than 70 percent of all American Indians and Alaska Natives residing in metropolitan centers, it is vital that our work include as many urban stakeholders as possible.