



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICERS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please see the [announcement](#) below from the Department of Interior (DOI). Earlier this week, DOI announced significant milestones and released their second and final report as part of the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative. We thank Secretary Haaland, Assistant Secretary Newland, and DOI for their work on this initiative. We cannot adequately express our gratitude for the work THPOs have done, are doing, and will continue to do bringing to light the truth of the Indian Boarding School era and bringing home the ancestors tragically lost during that period.

Secretary Haaland Announces Major Milestones for Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative

Assistant Secretary Newland completes investigation, releases final report

WASHINGTON — The Department of the Interior today announced next steps on the [Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative](#), launched in June 2021 by Secretary Deb Haaland as the first-ever comprehensive effort by the federal government to recognize the troubled legacy of past federal Indian boarding school policies with the goal of addressing their intergenerational impact and shedding light on past and present trauma in Indigenous communities.

The Department released the second and final volume of the [investigative report](#) called for as part of the Initiative, led by Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Bryan Newland. The second volume builds on the [initial volume](#) published in May 2022 to significantly expand on the number and details of institutions to include attendee deaths, the number of burial sites, participation of religious institutions and organizations, and federal dollars spent to operate these locations. It also includes policy recommendations for consideration by Congress and the Executive Branch to continue to chart a path to healing and redress for

Indigenous communities.

“The federal government – facilitated by the Department I lead – took deliberate and strategic actions through federal Indian boarding school policies to isolate children from their families, deny them their identities, and steal from them the languages, cultures and connections that are foundational to Native people. These policies caused enduring trauma for Indigenous communities that the Biden-Harris administration is working tirelessly to repair,” said **Secretary Haaland**. “I am immensely proud of the hundreds of Interior employees – many of them Indigenous – who gave of their time and themselves to ensure that this investigation was thoroughly completed to provide an accurate and honest picture. The Road to Healing does not end with this report – it is just beginning.”

“For the first time in the history of the United States, the federal government is accounting for its role in operating historical Indian boarding schools that forcibly confined and attempted to assimilate Indigenous children. This report further proves what Indigenous peoples across the country have known for generations – that federal policies were set out to break us, obtain our territories, and destroy our cultures and our lifeways,” said **Assistant Secretary Newland**. “It is undeniable that those policies failed, and now, we must bring every resource to bear to strengthen what they could not destroy. It is critical that this work endures, and that federal, state and Tribal governments build on the important work accomplished as part of the Initiative.”

Volume 2 updates the official [list of federal Indian boarding schools](#) and [maps](#) to include 417 institutions across 37 states or then-territories. It provides [detailed profiles](#) of each school and confirms that at least 973 American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian [children died](#) while attending federal operated or supported schools. It also identifies at least 74 marked and unmarked burial sites at 65 different school sites, and estimates that the U.S. government made [appropriations](#) available of more than \$23.3 billion in Fiscal Year 2023 inflation-adjusted dollars between 1871 and 1969 for the federal Indian boarding school system as well as other similar institutions and associated [assimilation policies](#).

In the process of publishing these two volumes, the Department’s staff and contractors reviewed approximately 103 million pages of federal records. Secretary Haaland and Assistant Secretary Newland also met with government officials and Indigenous leaders from Australia, Canada and New Zealand to understand the processes they used to address the legacy of similar assimilation policies, to include boarding schools and institutions.

The report includes eight recommendations for the federal government from Assistant

Secretary Newland that aim to support a path to healing the nation, including:

1. Issuing a formal acknowledgment and apology from the U.S. government regarding its role in adopting and implementing national federal Indian boarding school policies;
2. Investing in remedies to the present-day impacts of the federal Indian boarding school system;
3. Establishing a national memorial to acknowledge and commemorate the experiences of Indian Tribes, individuals, and families affected by the federal Indian boarding school system;
4. Identifying and repatriating remains of children and funerary objects who never returned from federal Indian boarding schools;
5. Returning former federal Indian Boarding school sites to Tribes;
6. Telling the story of federal Indian boarding schools to the American people and global community;
7. Investing in further research regarding the present-day health and economic impacts of the federal Indian boarding school system; and
8. Advancing international relationships in other countries with similar but their own unique histories of boarding schools or other assimilationist policies.

In recognition of the damage that federal Indian boarding schools and associated policies had on Native languages, investing in their restoration and preservation has been an early priority of the Biden-Harris administration. In 2021, the Departments of the Interior, Education and Health and Human Services launched an interagency initiative to preserve, protect and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice and develop [Native languages](#). Since then, both Secretary Haaland and Assistant Secretary Newland have traveled with First Lady Jill Biden and other Administration leaders to learn more about how Tribal Nations are leveraging federal investments to revitalize Native languages. The Administration expects to roll out a new ten-year Native Language Strategy by the end of 2024.

Telling the story of the impact of these boarding schools has been a guiding purpose of the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative, including [Secretary Haaland's op-ed](#) sharing her own personal history. In late 2023, Secretary Haaland and Assistant Secretary Newland completed "The Road to Healing," a historic 12-stop tour across the country that provided Indigenous survivors the opportunity to share with the federal government their

experiences in federal Indian boarding schools for the first time. The Road to Healing events included opportunities to connect survivors with trauma-informed support through the Department of Health and Human Service's Indian Health Service and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The reflections of many of those individuals are included in Volume 2 and transcripts are available on the [Federal Boarding School Initiative website](#).

The Department also launched an [oral history project](#) to document and make accessible to the public the experiences of generations of Indigenous then-children who attended the federal Indian boarding school system. Through a grant from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and with funding from the Mellon Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities, the [National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition](#) is currently interviewing survivors for what will be a collection of first-person narratives. The Department and the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, part of the largest museum, research and education complex in the world, are partnering to explore how best to share with the public the history of the federal Indian boarding school system and its role in U.S. development, with a proposed focus on the never-told-before experiences of survivors.

Some institutions classified as historical federal Indian boarding schools continue to operate in the United States, but without assimilationist intentions or practices, including schools operated or funded by the [Bureau of Indian Education \(BIE\)](#). The BIE provides high-quality educational opportunities from early childhood through life, accounting for the mental, physical, religious and cultural aspects of Native learners. Similarly, Kamehameha Schools across the Hawaiian Islands provide critical educational services, to include essential language preservation curriculum, that is unique and foundational to the Native Hawaiian Community.

Both volumes of the report as well as the associated appendices can be found the [Bureau of Indian Affairs website](#).

Thank you for all you do to protect culturally important places that perpetuate Native identity, resilience, and cultural endurance, and to empower Tribal preservation leaders.



Valerie J. Grussing, PhD

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PROTECTING NATIVE PLACES

THPOs: this is your organization! Your participation and support through membership and dues make our work possible. [JOIN OR RENEW TODAY!](#) Founded in 1998, the Association is a national non-profit membership organization of Tribal government officials who implement federal and Tribal preservation laws.



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NATHPO is so excited to share this job opening for a geospatial and general application/database development position to support our [Land Area & Name Directory \(LAND\) Project](#)! The job description is attached and on our [Community Job Postings page](#). Please help us spread the word!

We are also proud to announce two brand new projects we are undertaking in partnership with the National Park Service (NPS). Both of these projects are aimed at helping Tribal Nations and their THPOs perform the sacred work of telling their people's stories not just in Indian Country, but around the United States, so those stories can finally begin to receive the attention they deserve.

I'm particularly glad that one of these endeavors - the Indigenous Reconstruction Project - is the product of feedback the NPS heard directly from THPOs. The THPO community has always been good about making their voices heard, and I am grateful for the difference that outspokenness is making and honored to be able to help put THPOs' feedback into action.

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NEW NATHPO JOB OPENING!:

Geospatial and General Application/Database Development Position

The National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (NATHPO) is currently seeking to fill a 3-year opening for a skilled professional in both the realms of geospatial and general application/database development for the Land Area & Name Directory (LAND) Project. The full description is attached as well as [on our website](#). Understanding the locations of Tribally important places and resources is essential to their preservation and consideration during emergency response activities and planning for infrastructure, energy, and broadband development – including NHPA Section 106 reviews. And Tribes are the only people who can provide that information, as appropriate.

This project will create a geospatial platform for information on Tribal cultural resource **contacts and areas of interest**. It will be driven by Tribes in its design, decision making, and data population. It will improve both protection of Native places and efficiency of required project reviews (please see the website for additional information). The person to fill this position will be responsible for crafting both LAND's underlying database and the application through which users will interact with the database, so the preferred candidate must be technically competent and have a good understanding of user interface (UI) and user experience (UX) design.

Candidates must apply to NATHPO Executive Director, Valerie Grussing (valerie@nathpo.org), and Operations Director, Melissa Madrigal (melissa@nathpo.org), via email by September 13 , 2024. Please provide a portfolio of projects when submitting your resume.

Indian Boarding Schools National Historic Landmarks Project

In May 2024, The National Park Service, National Historic Landmarks program, through a cooperative agreement with NATHPO, engaged a cultural resources consultant to support the Indian Boarding Schools National Historic Landmarks Program in developing a nationwide historic context for future designation applications of Indian Boarding Schools and completing an Indian Boarding School National Historic Landmarks (NHL) nomination for the Stewart Indian School in Nevada. After a nation-wide search, NATHPO engaged

Native firm, the OSIYO Group, to perform this critical work over the coming two years. The full announcement is attached.

For this project, the OSIYO Group assembled a team of highly qualified, multidisciplinary professionals that includes Nesta Anderson, Ph.D., Marie Archambeault, M.A., Sammye Meadows, and Roni Briggs, OSIYO Group principal. Drawing from their previous collaborations on Tribal consultation projects, Traditional Cultural Properties Surveys, Historic Contexts, NRHP nominations, and working with descendant communities, the OSIYO Group team will be actively seeking valued input from Native nations and Indigenous individuals with direct connections to Indian Boarding Schools across the country as we progress through the project.

If you or a loved one have been impacted by Indian boarding schools, we hope that you will be willing to share your stories with us. We understand the sensitive nature of this information and will work with participants to maintain confidentiality as requested. We will be conducting outreach and engagement throughout the project, and we also encourage you to reach out to us at any time using the project email address NHLBoardingSchool@NATHPO.org. We appreciate your consideration and participation. Wado.

Indigenous Reconstruction History Project

In July 2024, NATHPO and the National Park Service engaged a team of academic researchers to conduct a two-year special history study on Native American experiences during the Reconstruction Era. **NPS Region 2 (Southeast) and NATHPO developed this program following feedback from THPOs** that NPS needs to do a better job talking about the U.S. removal of Native Americans from their homelands, establishment of boarding schools, and allotment of land occupied by Native American people. Much of that history occurred during what is known as the Reconstruction Era, but scholarship and educational materials on the period are focused largely, if not exclusively, on formerly enslaved persons, white southerners, and the rise of white supremacists. The full description is attached.

This project seeks to help tell the story of the Reconstruction Era from an Indigenous perspective, and does so by listening to Native American scholars, cultural experts, and Elders. To that end, NPS and NATHPO are partnering with the Center for Native American and Indigenous Studies at Emory University to complete this work. The project team includes: Malinda Maynor Lowery, Ph.D. and Beth Michel of Emory University; and Brooke Bauer, Ph.D., of University of Tennessee-Knoxville.

Please be on the lookout for formal invitations from the project team to join the advisory

board and other opportunities to participate in this exciting project.

NATHPO Community Calendar & Job Board & Grant Opportunities

Stay current on important happenings using our new [Calendar of Events](#), and post your own to share! And let us know if you have a job posting you would like to share and we'll post it on our [Community Job Board](#). AND don't forget to browse our listing of relevant [Grant Opportunities](#).

Save The Date! 2024 NATHPO Annual Conference & Sacred Places Summit

The [24th Annual NATHPO Conference & Sacred Places Summit](#) will take place August 12-16, 2024, at the Ho-Chunk Gaming Resort in the Wisconsin Dells. If you're unable to attend the conference in person, you can register to attend virtually [HERE](#).

If you would like to become one of our conference sponsors, please contact please contact Melissa Madrigal at melissa@nathpo.org. Information about sponsorship rates is available [HERE](#).

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