

2023-2024



AIANTA
American Indian Alaska Native
Tourism Association

ANNUAL REPORT

“INDIGENOUS TOURISM:
UNITING TRADITION AND
INNOVATION”

www.aianta.org | 6000 Uptown Blvd NE, Suite 150, Albuquerque, NM 87110 | (505) 724-3592

About Us

Mission:

Define, introduce, grow and sustain American Indian Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian tourism that honors traditions and values.

Focus:

Technical assistance, training, marketing and advocacy.

Vision:

We envision a future where Indigenous Tourism serves as a powerful catalyst for economic sovereignty, celebrates cultural authenticity, and empowers Native Nations and communities to thrive through meaningful partnerships, powerful cultural expression, and global recognition.

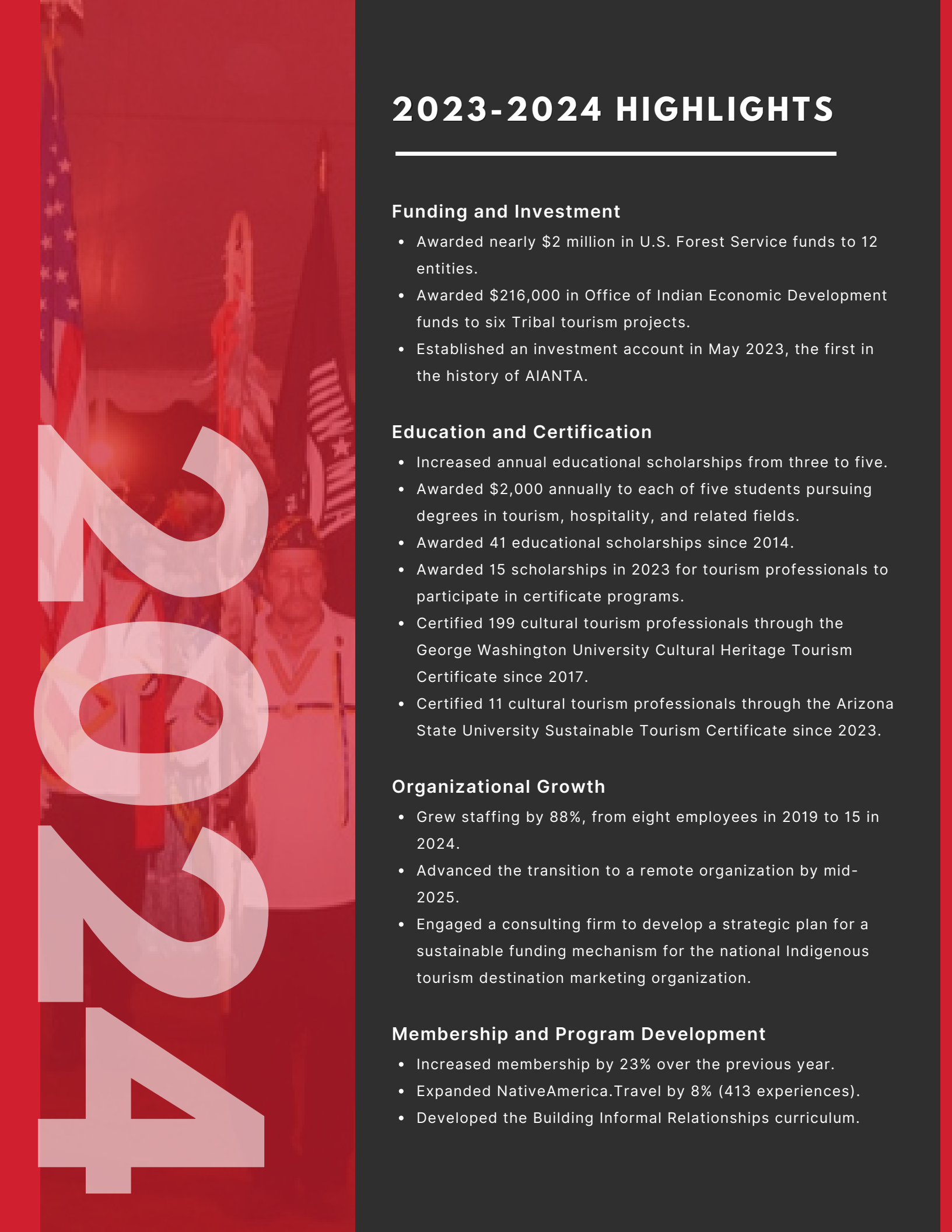
Values:

Sustainability, Authenticity, Equity, Collaboration, Innovation



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2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Funding and Investment

- Awarded nearly \$2 million in U.S. Forest Service funds to 12 entities.
- Awarded \$216,000 in Office of Indian Economic Development funds to six Tribal tourism projects.
- Established an investment account in May 2023, the first in the history of AIANTA.

Education and Certification

- Increased annual educational scholarships from three to five.
- Awarded \$2,000 annually to each of five students pursuing degrees in tourism, hospitality, and related fields.
- Awarded 41 educational scholarships since 2014.
- Awarded 15 scholarships in 2023 for tourism professionals to participate in certificate programs.
- Certified 199 cultural tourism professionals through the George Washington University Cultural Heritage Tourism Certificate since 2017.
- Certified 11 cultural tourism professionals through the Arizona State University Sustainable Tourism Certificate since 2023.

Organizational Growth

- Grew staffing by 88%, from eight employees in 2019 to 15 in 2024.
- Advanced the transition to a remote organization by mid-2025.
- Engaged a consulting firm to develop a strategic plan for a sustainable funding mechanism for the national Indigenous tourism destination marketing organization.

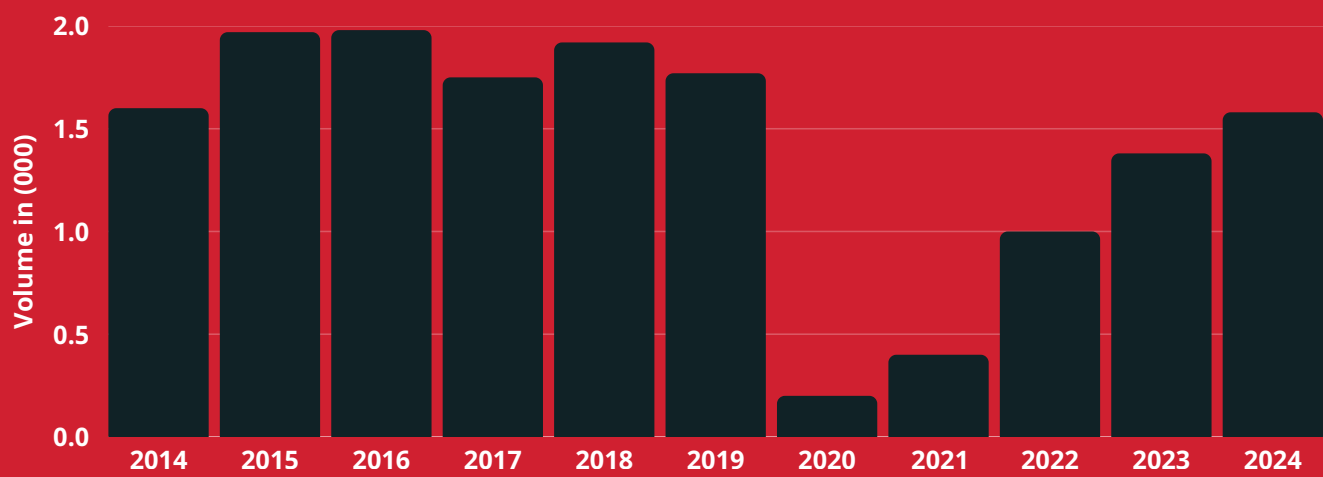
Membership and Program Development

- Increased membership by 23% over the previous year.
- Expanded NativeAmerica.Travel by 8% (413 experiences).
- Developed the Building Informal Relationships curriculum.

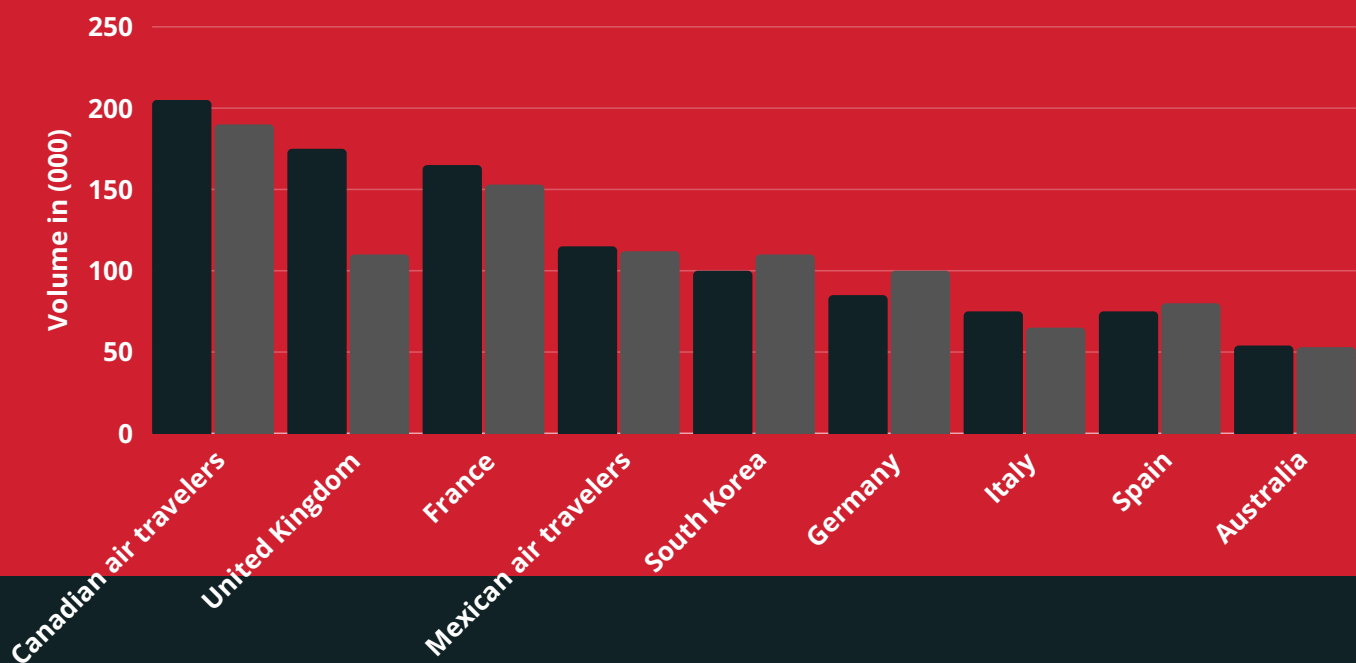
Visitor Trends

OVERSEAS VISITS TO THE U.S. & INDIAN COUNTRY VOLUME & MARKET SHARE 2014-2024

Top Origin Markets: Canada, UK, France, Mexico, South Korea



Top Destinations: California, Nevada, New York, Arizona and Florida



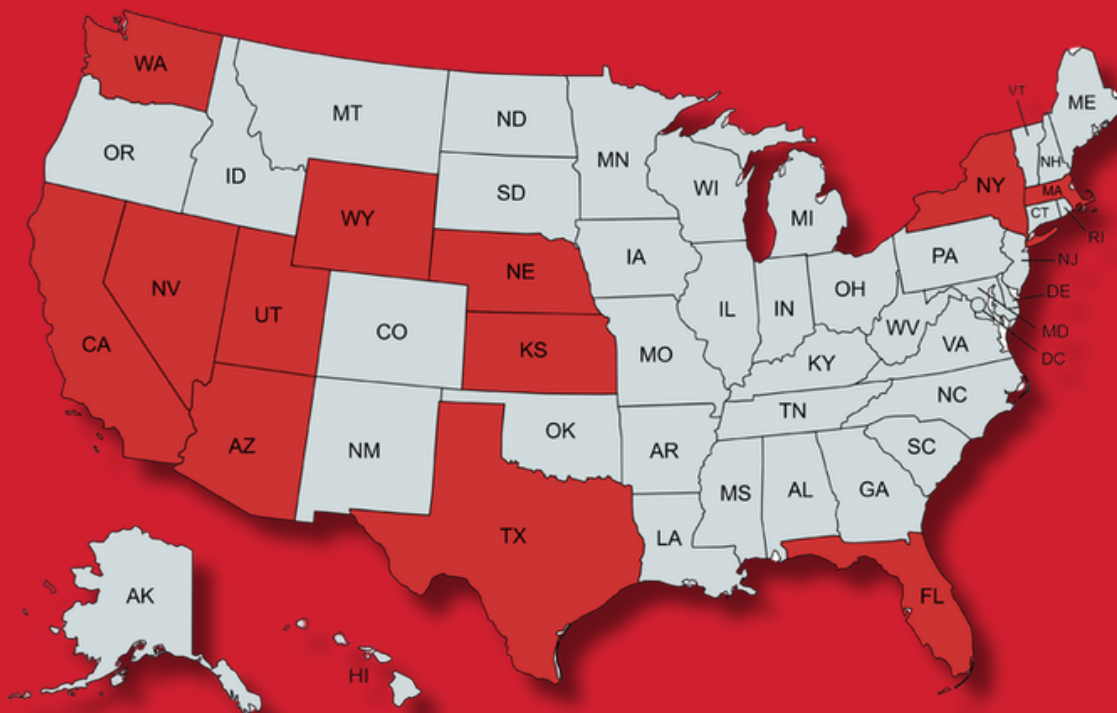


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TOP STATES VISITED BY OVERSEAS TRAVELERS TO THE U.S. WHO VISIT AMERICAN INDIAN COMMUNITIES 2022-2024

Top Destinations: California, Nevada, New York, Arizona and Florida



POPULAR ACTIVITIES AMONG OVERSEAS TRAVELERS WHO VISIT AMERICAN INDIAN COMMUNITIES



Shopping
83.1%



Sightseeing
77.4%



**National Parks/
Monuments**
35.6%



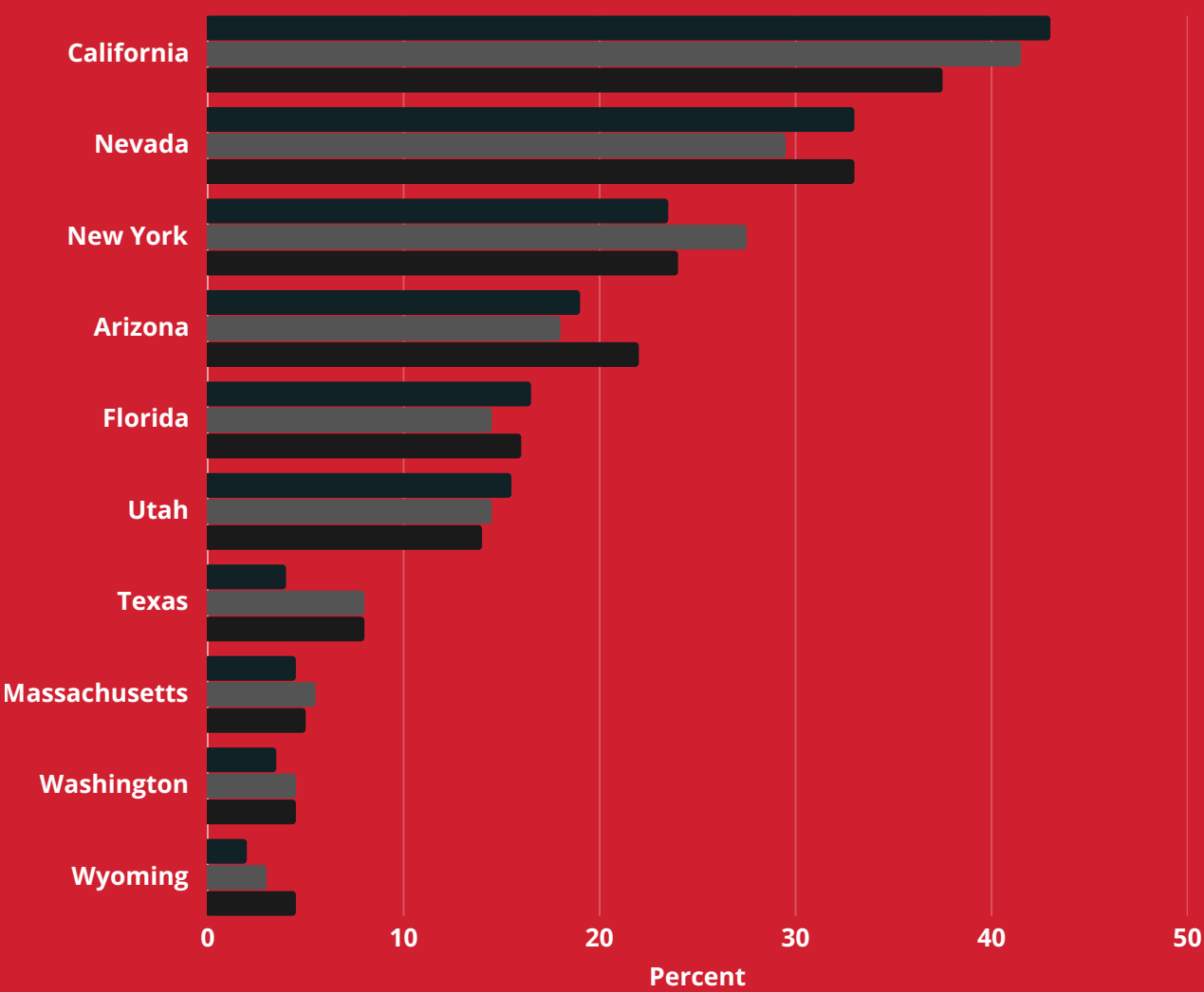
**Art Galleries/
Museums**
29.8%



**Small Towns/
Countryside**
29.1%

Visitor Trends

TOP STATES VISITED BY OVERSEAS TRAVELERS TO THE U.S. WHO VISIT AMERICAN INDIAN COMMUNITIES 2022-2024



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM OFFICE Data for -2023



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Marketing Success

FLAGSHIP CAMPAIGNS

- American Indian Tourism Conference 2023
- Native American Heritage Month 2023
- Go International 2024
- National Travel & Tourism Week 2024
- IPW 2024
- AIANTA Launches Community Navigator Partnership with USDA Forest Service 2024
- American Indigenous Tourism Conference 2024
- Destination Original Indigenous Tourism Launch 2024

DIGITAL GROWTH

- 5% Instagram Follower Growth
- 37% LinkedIn Follower Growth
- 34% Facebook Growth (AIANTA)
- 26% YouTube Subscriber Growth
- New NativeAmerica.Travel website (Google translate, Itinerary Building and Booking Tool)

Public Relations Achievements



PR Story Count: 811

Total Potential Audience: 7.2B

(as a result of earned media stories)

Top earned media stories as a result of Public Relations include (but not limited to):

- **Global Media:** BBC Travel, Yahoo! News, Travel Weekly
- **National Media:** Associated Press, USA Today, NPR, Condé Nast Traveler, AFAR, Forbes, National Geographic, AAA Magazine, Cowboys & Indians Magazine, Sierra Magazine
- **Industry Media:** Travel Pulse, TravelAge West, Travel Weekly
- **Indian Country Media:** Tribal Business News, Native News Online, Tribal Gaming & Hospitality Magazine, Indian Country Today, Navajo Times
- And hundreds of local and regional broadcast, print and online publications across the U.S.

Partnerships & Events

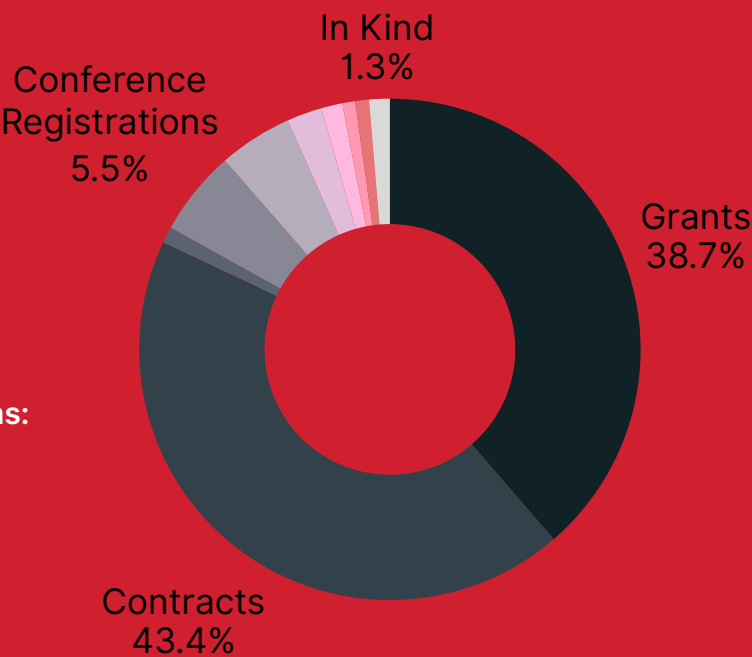


- Engaged 119 Tribes and Native Nations and communities across 17 states.
- Participated in 14 trade shows and travel expos, including Brand USA Travel Week, National Tour Association Travel Exchange, International Inbound Travel Association, Go West, and IPW.
- Signed a memorandum of agreement with the International Trade Administration, U.S. Commercial Service.
- Established a partnership agreement with the International Inbound Travel Association.
- Established a reciprocal agreement with the National Tour Association.
- Increased 2023 American Indigenous Tourism Conference revenue by 37.9% over the previous year.
- Secured 14 new sponsors for the 2023 American Indigenous Tourism Conference, while retaining 18 sponsors from the previous year.
- Increased net profit for the 2023 American Indigenous Tourism Conference by 31.25% over the previous year.
- Generated \$22,075 in registration fees and sponsorships for 2024 Go International, up from \$6,600 the previous year, setting a new record for the association.
- Recorded 47 total registrations for 2024 Go International.
- Reached 1,327 webinar registrants and 646 attendees across 2023 and 2024 engagement efforts.

Financial Overview

Revenue: \$3.63M

- **Grants:** \$1.4M
- **Contracts:** \$1.57M
- **Membership:** \$37,824
- **Conference Registrations:** \$199,263
- **Sponsorships:** \$171,776
- **Contributions:** \$82,287
- **Educational & Training Programs:** \$49,409
- **Investment Income:** \$29,989
- **All Other:** \$31,780
- **In Kind:** \$48,170



Expenses: \$3.34M

- **Program Services:** 89%
- **Management & General:** 9%
- **Fundraising:** 2%





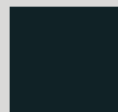
Recognitions



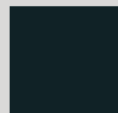
Gained 413 member organizations—
an increase of 8% (383 in 2023)



Clyde Warrior Civil Rights
Recognition presented by the
Native Professional Advancement
Center in 2024



Awarded by Condé Nast Traveler's
2024 Bright Ideas in Travel list for
its partnership with the U.S. Forest
Service Community Navigator
program.



CEO Sherry L. Rupert was also
recognized in 2024 by Leisure
Group Travel's Women in Tourism
Leadership Spotlight, highlighting
her contributions to Indigenous
and cultural tourism across the
U.S.

Leadership

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Travis Owens (President, Oklahoma Region)
Lora Ann Chaisson (Vice President, Southeast Region)
Kate Anderson (Secretary, Southern California Region)
Brian Wadsworth (Treasurer, Great Basin Region)
Nikki Graham (Alaska Region)
Jamey Cagle (Southeast Alaska Region)
Jimmy John Thompson (Central California Region)
Mālia Sanders (Hawai'i Region)
Kirby Metoxen (Midwest Region)
Charlene Virgilio (Northeast Region)
Hanford McCloud (Northwest Region)
Michelle Liberty (Pacific Northwest Region)
Darian Morsette (Rocky Mountain Region)
Sarah Kazhe (Southwest Region)

EXECUTIVE TEAM



Sherry L. Rupert
CEO



Hannah Peterson
Program Development
Director



Gail Chehak
Community and Partner
Relations Director



Ciarra Greene
Education and Business
Development Director

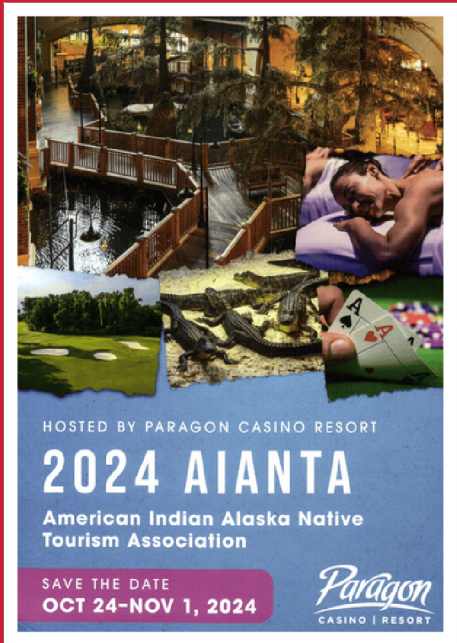
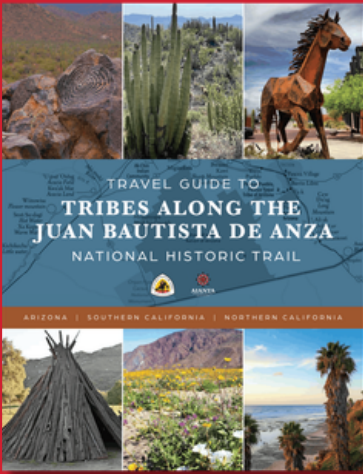
2024 Priorities



2024 American Indigenous Tourism Conference at Paragon Casino Resort in Marksville, Louisiana



Juan Bautista de Anza Trail guide and Indigenous placenames map



Community Navigator Program in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service



DOIT agreement in place, establishing a foundational partnership in the formation of a global entity



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THANK YOU

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SOCIAL MEDIA:
[@aianta](https://www.instagram.com/aianta)

WEBSITE:
www.aianta.org

