

**NWIHA**  
NORTHWEST INDIAN  
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

ABOUT US

VOTING MEMBERS

ASSOCIATE  
MEMBERS

## Winter Conference

Our Winter Meeting, held January 13-15 at the Little Creek Casino Resort and hosted by [The Squaxin Island Tribe](#), was very well received by all those attending, **including 91 registrants** from our Northwest tribes and Associate Members. Thank

you Chairman Kris Peters of the Squaxin Island Tribe for kicking us off and to all who came out and participated!



## Thank You to Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe and Housing Authority

We would like to express gratitude and offer a special thank you to the **Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe** and the **Port Gamble S'Klallam Housing Authority (PGSHA)**. In an incredible highlight to our Winter Conference, PGSHA Executive Director and NWIHA Executive Committee Vice-Chair Kara Horton facilitated donation of \$25,000 on behalf of PGSHA to the Northwest Indian Housing Association at the end of 2025.

This donation comprises the developer fee as part of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. Please talk to us or Kara about utilizing your developer fees to donate to worthy nonprofits like NWIHA. Donations like this keep operations going and help us connect tribes and TDHEs working to build sustainable housing solutions in Indian Country!

We offer sincere gratitude and thanks to Kara, her team, and the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe.

# Winter Conference Presentations & Training Details



## Thank You to All Our Winter Conference Presenters!

For those who were unable to attend or for those who would like to revisit any of the presentations or training, we have made both videos for presentations and slide decks available on our website in the password-protected Members Portal, where NWIHA Members may view or download, for the following (please contact your Executive Director/Director if you need help remembering the password):

- **Hobbs, Straus, Dean & Walker;**
- **The Tribal Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (TIAC);**
- **Washington State Housing Finance Commission;**
- **Oregon Energy Trust;**
- **Willdan Group;**
- **Washington State Department of Commerce; and**
- **HUD/NwONAP.**

Also included are a copy of our Conference Handbook, a video of and slide deck from our Winter Conference Business Meeting, and all training materials.

[NWIHA Members Portal for Winter Conference 2026 Materials](#)

## Alternate Liaison Appointment and Confirmation

After Chairwoman Sami Jo Difuntorum presented the attending membership with her appointment of **Wendy Lawrence (Makah) as the NAIHC Liaison Alternate**, Wendy was confirmed. Congratulations, Wendy!



## Brook Kristovich Memorial Scholarship Auction

At the conclusion of the Winter Meeting Banquet, NWIHA carried out our Annual Brook Kristovich Memorial Scholarship Auction, all proceeds from which serve to help fund tribal students. With help from professional auctioneer and NWIHA Associate Member Joe Diehl, we managed to raise nearly **\$2400.00** to put entirely towards our 2026 Scholarship Fund!



Special thanks to big donors from 2025:

**Hobbs, Straus, Dean & Walker**  
**Tribal First**  
**Joe Diehl, LLC**  
**RTHawk Housing Alliance**  
**First Tribal Lending**  
**Park N Play Northwest**  
**David Boyd (Northwest Office of Native American Programs)**  
**AMERIND**  
**And many more!**

NWIHA sends our gratitude to all who contributed auction items, made purchases, and those who donated directly: Thank you!

**Special  
Thanks  
to Associate  
Member:**



Park N Play Northwest donated a total of **\$2000** to the 2026 Brook Kristovich Memorial Scholarship at our Winter Banquet and pledged an additional \$500 donation for every playground purchased by a NWIHA Member, **good until June 30th, 2026.**



We want to sincerely thank Park N Play for their partnership and the great work they do with our Member Tribes and TDHEs!

Reach out to Kris Schlosser and his team at [parknplaynorthwest@gmail.com](mailto:parknplaynorthwest@gmail.com) if you are thinking about finishing up a project and are looking to add a playground and you will be directly contributing to Tribal student education support in the meantime!

## 2026 Brook Kristovich Memorial Scholarship Now Accepting Applications

Applications with clear instructions for completion and submission may be downloaded from our website or by following the links or button below. You can best notify your tribal members of this program by forwarding this email to them, or instructing them to go to [NWIHA website's Brook Kristovich Memorial Scholarship](#) tab. We also recommend this information be forwarded to Tribal Education departments.

Please note that all applications and supporting documents must be submitted by email to [info@nwiha.org](mailto:info@nwiha.org) on or before 5:00 PM PST, March 31, 2026, as outlined on the Application Form. Please advise your tribal applicants to be very careful in completing the requirements exactly as prescribed, and don't wait until the last minute to submit!

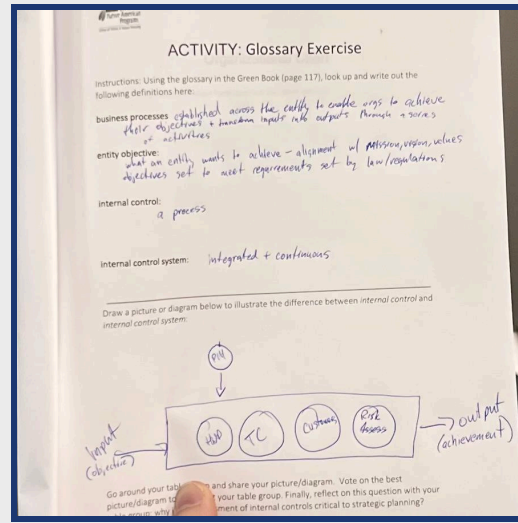
All applicants, selected or not, will be notified of the NWIHA Executive Committee decisions. Successful applicants will be recognized at the NWIHA Spring Conference Banquet Dinner to be held Tuesday evening, April 7, 2026.

Complete instructions are contained in the Application Form linked in the button below. Any questions can be addressed to the NWIHA at [info@nwiha.org](mailto:info@nwiha.org), or by calling (360) 280-7707, as long as they are received prior to the submission deadline of 5:00 PM PST, March 31, 2026.

[SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FORM](#)

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**Winter Conference Training:  
Fundamentals of Strategic Planning—Internal Controls**



Trainer Rodney Clements kicked off our Strategic Planning training series for 2026 with Part One: Internal Controls. Our Spring and Fall Conferences will continue the series in Strategic Planning, so please stay tuned for more details. We will build on learnings from each session, and they are meant to be taken in series, but all Members (staff and leadership) are welcome to pick up any session they are interested in along the way!

Thank you, Rodney and we will next see you for part two in April at the Suquamish Clearwater Casino Resort in Suquamish, Washington for our Spring Conference!

## For AMERIND Members ONLY!!!



### 2026 AMERIND Safety Poster Contest

#### The 2026 AMERIND Safety Poster Contest Is Here Again— Another Chance to Highlight Your Local Artists!

AMERIND has announced their 2026 poster contest. **If, and only if!!!, your Tribe is an AMERIND member**, it can begin hosting its contest to decide the winners to represent your Tribe at the regional level. Please select one winner from all entries you receive for the following categories:

- K-3rd
- 4th-6th
- 7th-8th

Then, you may submit your Tribe's winner from each category (for a total of three winners) by email to [info@nwiha.org](mailto:info@nwiha.org) or by mail to NWIHA, PO Box 7653, Olympia, WA, 98507-7653.

To be considered, entries must be RECEIVED no later than 5:00 PM on Friday, July 10, 2026.

On Monday, July 13, 2026, all NWIHA members (Voting and Associate) will begin the judging process by voting on their favorite entries that will be posted through a survey/voting link. Regional winners will be submitted to AMERIND and announced via NWIHA website and email notification on July 31, 2026. National winners will be announced at the AMERIND Annual Meeting in August 2026.

Please click on the red button below to download the AMERIND Safety Poster Contest flyer for rules of the contest and details on how students must submit their entries!

[AMERIND 2026 Safety Poster Contest Flyer](#)

## Updates & News from NwONAP

### NAHASDA30!

On February 4th, PIH Assistant Secretary Ben Hobbs issued a [Dear Tribal Leader letter](#) announcing NAHASDA30—a special initiative celebrating 30 years of NAHASDA's impact. Tribal leaders, Tribal housing practitioners, and stakeholders are invited to join us in honoring this milestone by sharing your Tribal community's NAHASDA30 story.

Learn more at [www.hud.gov/nahasda30](http://www.hud.gov/nahasda30).

### Tribal Consultation on Deregulation for the Section 184 Indian Housing Loan Guarantee Program

On January 28th, HUD published a Dear Tribal Leader letter to announce a new Tribal consultation on deregulation for the Section 184 program. "Pursuant to HUD's Tribal consultation policy, HUD is seeking Tribal comments to revise certain regulations in 24 CFR Part 1005. Although the Section 184 Program regulations were extensively revised following thirteen Tribal consultations that occurred between 2022 and 2023, HUD is now seeking further Tribal feedback on the revised regulations that may be administratively burdensome to Tribes and lenders participating in the program. The Section 184 program is a critical program that brings mortgage capital to Tribal communities, and we are always interested in ways we can make the program work better for you and your Tribal members" [Read the full DTL linked on HUD's website](#).

### ROSS Rapid Response Program

HUD is excited to announce the Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) Rapid Response Program (RRP), a one-time funding opportunity designed to help HUD-assisted communities respond quickly to unexpected disasters and urgent social needs.

RRP funding can be used for service coordination and limited direct services to support residents affected by emergencies, including -but not limited to:

- Natural disasters (e.g., wildfires or hurricanes)
- Public health crises (e.g., gun violence, environmental hazards, or community contamination)
- Economic disruptions (e.g., sudden closure of a major employer impacting residents)

Where can I learn more?

- Read the [Announcement Page](#).
- Read [Notice PIH 2025-23](#) for full program and application details
- Review the ROSS RRP [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)
- Join us at the [ROSS RRP Notice Webinar on February 11 @ 2:00 PM EST](#) for an overview of the program.

## BABA Resources

### [BABA HUD Exchange Page](#)

The [BABA for Tribal Recipients](#) landing page in HUD Exchange hosts previously recorded trainings, presentation slides, guidance, notices, and AONAP points of contact.

Be sure to bookmark this page for future BABA resources!

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## Member News & News from Indian Country

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### Oregon Launches First- of-Its-Kind Tribal Housing Grant Fund



*[From the February 18, 2026 Edition of Lincoln County Leader Online](#)*

Oregon has unveiled the **Tribal Housing Grant Fund (THGF)**, a first-of-its-kind state program designed to help meet the housing needs of the **nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon**. The initiative will provide flexible state funding that tribal governments can use to develop housing solutions that reflect their priorities, complementing existing federal programs such as

the Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) under the *Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA)*.

The Tribal Housing Grant Fund aims to support a wide range of activities — from home construction and rehabilitation to more innovative, locally tailored housing solutions — helping tribes address chronic overcrowding, substandard housing, and affordability barriers that many Native communities continue to face.

**Sami Jo Difuntorum**, Executive Director of the **Siletz Tribal Housing Department** (and NWIHA Chairwoman), has been a vocal leader on tribal housing issues in the region. Her work with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians includes expanding affordable and culturally grounded housing opportunities both on and off the reservation, demonstrating how tribal leadership and state support can work together to produce meaningful results for Native families.

This initiative reflects growing recognition at the state level of the unique housing challenges in Indian Country and the need for collaborative, sovereignty-respecting approaches that build on federal frameworks like NAHASDA while offering new avenues of funding and flexibility for tribal housing authorities.

## Washington Awards \$13.5 Million to Eastern Washington Affordable Housing Projects



*From January 5, 2026 Online KLXY.com News*

The Washington State Department of Commerce has awarded \$13.5 million to support affordable housing initiatives across Eastern Washington through its Homeownership Capital Programs funding round announced on January 5, 2026. This investment is part of a larger statewide allocation of more than \$63 million to 43 projects aimed at creating 621 affordable homeownership opportunities for first-time buyers by funding new construction, down payment assistance, and affordability subsidies that help keep homes permanently affordable.

NWIHA Member **Spokane Indian Housing Authority** received \$1.5m for its Steelhead Project from these funds.

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**Congratulations Lummi Nation  
and Lummi Nation Housing Authority:**

## Recipient of The Harvard Project Honoring Nations Award



The Lummi Nation's **Sche'lang'en Village Transformational Wrap-Around Program** was selected as one of the six awardees for 2025 and achieved the "High Honors" distinction. This recognition underscores the program's excellence in culturally grounded, comprehensive wrap-around services that reunite families and promote community healing. Achieving "High Honors" places the Lummi Nation among the most exemplary tribal governance initiatives in the country for 2025. The award not only acknowledges the achievement but connects the Nation to a distinguished alumni network of governance innovation and offers wider visibility and resources for shared learning nationally.

We would like to congratulate Lummi Nation and the Lummi Nation Housing Authority (LNHA) on their incredible work to bring the Sche'lang'en Village to the community, and specifically, we would like to honor **NWIHA Executive Committee Secretary and LNHA Executive Director Diana Phair** for her instrumental role.

Please read more about the project on [LNHA's website about the Sche'lang'en Village Transformational Wrap-Around Program](#). Additionally, visit [The Harvard Project's 2025 Honoring Nations Awards page](#) to learn more about the awards and Lummi Nation's "High Honors" designation.

## Associate Members

First of all NWIHA would like to welcome new Associate Members **Habitat for Humanity Clallam County, Mountain View Homes, and Sweetgrass Consulting!**

NWIHA asks that you please consider all our Associate Members when you need any of the services or products they provide. To find out more information regarding any of our Associate Members, just click on their logo below.



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## Upcoming Meeting



Our Spring Conference will be held April 7-9, 2026, at the Suquamish Clearwater Casino Resort in Suquamish, Washington.

Northwest Indian Housing Association | [nwiha.org](http://nwiha.org)

Northwest Indian Housing Association | PO Box 7653 | Olympia, WA 98507-7653 US

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