

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

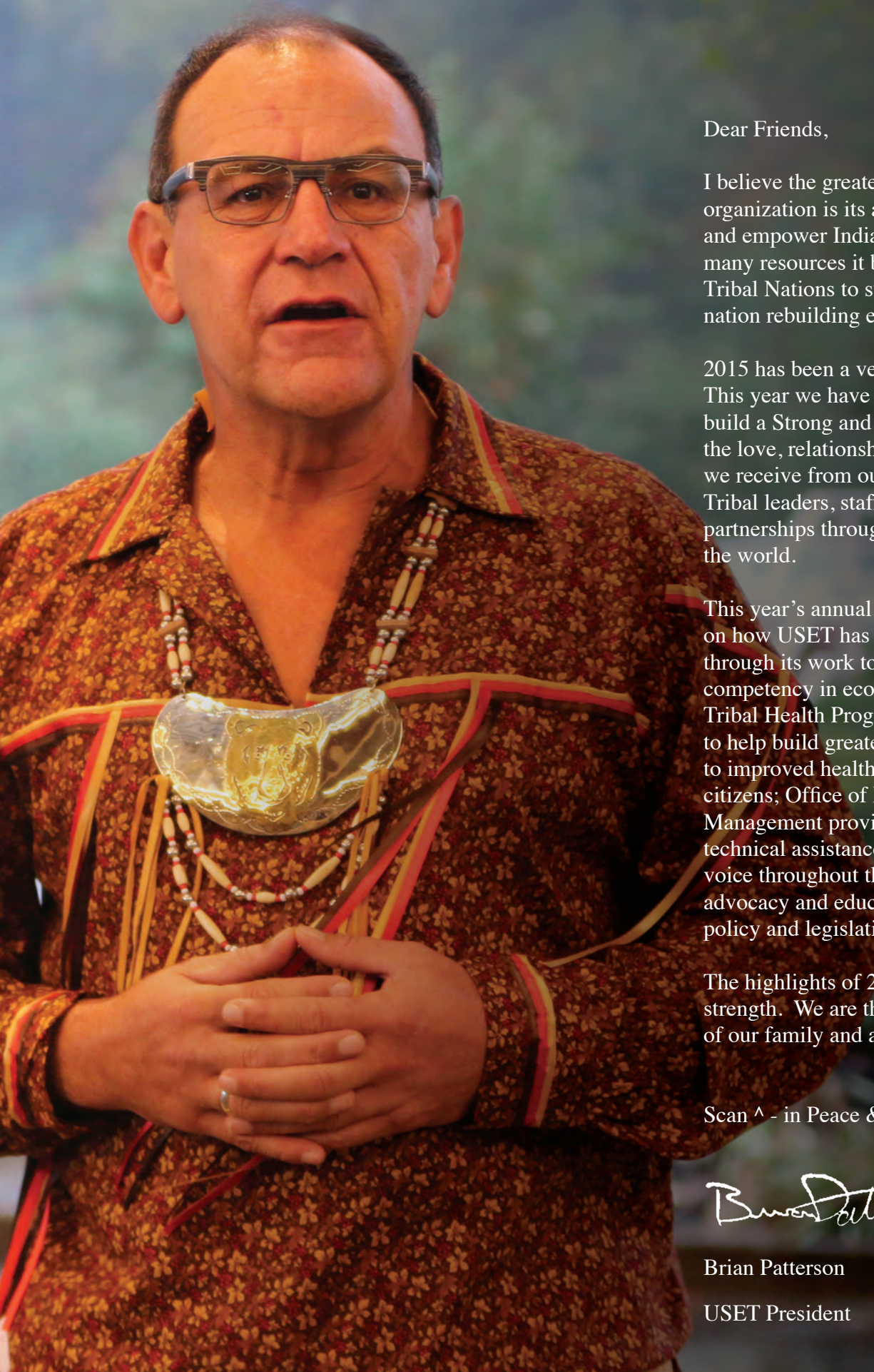
USET STRONG



Because there is Strength in Unity



A Letter from USET President, Brian Patterson



Dear Friends,

I believe the greatest attribute of this organization is its ability to help strengthen and empower Indian Country through the many resources it brings to its member Tribal Nations to support their respective nation rebuilding efforts.

2015 has been a very special year for USET. This year we have made great strides to build a Strong and effective organization on the love, relationships, resources, and spirit we receive from our member Tribal Nations, Tribal leaders, staff, and strategic alliance partnerships throughout Indian Country and the world.

This year's annual report places focus on how USET has built greater strength through its work to build a new core competency in economic development; Tribal Health Program Support continues to help build greater access and support to improved healthcare for Tribal Nation citizens; Office of Environmental Resource Management provides on-site training and technical assistance; and we remain a strong voice throughout the United States with our advocacy and education for Indian Country policy and legislation.

The highlights of 2015 demonstrate USET's strength. We are thankful that you are part of our family and a part of USET Strong!

Scan ^ - in Peace & Friendship,

Brian Patterson

USET President



USET Mission Statement

United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. is dedicated to enhancing the development of federally recognized Indian Tribes, to improving the capabilities of Tribal governments, to assist the USET Members and their governments in dealing effectively with public policy issues, and to serve the broad needs of Indian people.

History of USET

On October 4, 1968, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida and the Seminole Tribe of Florida met in Cherokee, North Carolina with the shared idea that some form of unity between the Tribal Nations would enhance their dealings with the federal government. The result of their vision of “Strength in Unity” was the inter-tribal council United Southeastern Tribes. Incorporated in 1969, United Southeastern Tribes operated first out of Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, and then moved to Sarasota, Florida. In 1975 it relocated again to Nashville, Tennessee, where it resides today. The organization changed its name in 1978 to United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. to better reflect its membership, as federally recognized Tribal Nations from Maine, to Florida, to Texas affiliated themselves with the organization.

Today, United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. is a non-profit, inter-tribal organization that collectively represents its member Tribal Nations at the regional and national level. USET has grown to include 26 federally recognized Member Nations, operating through various workgroups and committees and providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and information.



Board of Directors

Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas

Nita Battise - Chairwoman
Ronnie Thomas - Vice Chairman

Aroostook Band of Micmacs

Edward Peter-Paul - Chief
Jennifer Kiandoli - Vice Chief

Catawba Indian Nation

William "Bill" Harris - Chief
Wayne George - Assistant Chief

Cayuga Nation

Clint Halftown - Nation Representative
Sharon LeRoy - Secretary

Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana

O'Neil J. Darden, Jr - Chairman
April Wyatt - Vice Chairwoman

Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana

Lovelin Poncho - Chairman
Jerold Poncho - Secretary/Treasurer

Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

Patrick Lambert - Principal Chief
Bill Taylor - Chairman

Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians

Brenda Commander - Chief
Linda Raymond - Tribal Council

Jena Band of Choctaw Indians

B. Cheryl Smith - Chief
Libby Rogers - Council Member

Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation

Rodney Butler - Chairman
Crystal M. Whipple - Vice Chairwoman

Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe

Cedric Cromwell - Chairman
Jessie "Little Doe" Baird - Vice Chairwoman

Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida

Roy Cypress, Jr. - Interim Chairman

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

Phyllis J. Anderson - Chief
Ronnie Henry - Vice Chief

The Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut

Kevin P. Brown - Chairman
R. James Gessner - Vice Chairman

Narragansett Indian Tribe

Matthew Thomas - Chief Sachem
Randy Noka - Councilman

Oneida Indian Nation

Ray Halbritter - Nation Representative
Dale Rood - Council Member

Passamaquoddy Tribe- Indian Township

William Nicholas - Chief
Leslie Nicholas - Vice Chief

Passamaquoddy Tribe- Pleasant Point

Frederick Moore III - Chief
Vera Francis - Vice Chief

Penobscot Indian Nation

Kirk E. Francis, Sr. - Chief
Brenda Fields - Director of Grants and Contracts

Poarch Band of Creek Indians

Stephanie Bryan - Chairwoman
Robert R. McGhee - Vice Chairman

Seminole Tribe of Florida

James Billie - Chairman
Jim Shore - General Counsel

Seneca Nation of Indians

Maurice John - President
Todd Gates - Treasurer

Shinnecock Indian Nation

Bryan Polite - Chairman
Daniel S. Collins, Sr. - Vice Chairman

St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, New York

Eric Thompson - Chief
Beverly Cook - Chief

Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana

Joey P. Barbry - Chairman
Marshall Ray Sampson, Sr. - Vice Chairman

Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah)

Tobias Vanderhoop - Chairman
Richard Randolph - Vice Chairman

USET Executive Officers

Brian Patterson, Oneida Nation - President
Randy Noka, Narragansett Indian Tribe - Vice President
Dr. Lynn Malerba, The Mohegan Tribe - Secretary
Kirk Francis, Penobscot Indian Nation - Treasurer

Executive Director (Non-Officer)

Kitcki A. Carroll

Why are we USET STRONG?

Strong because we are united

Strong because there is richness derived from our diversity

Strong because we are passionate and dedicated to a common purpose

Strong because peace, justice, and righteousness are our guiding light

Strong because of all the gifts and blessings bestowed upon us by our Creator

Strong because of our ancestors who sacrificed so much

Strong because of the responsibility we share to the next seven generations

Strong because of the innocence and vibrant spirit of our children

Strong because of the sacred power derived from our women

Strong because of the wisdom and guidance of our elders

Strong because together we have persevered

Strong because together we will succeed and prosper

Strong because we respect and care for one another

Strong because we are a family

Together we are...USET Strong!



2015

USET EVENTS

IMPACT WEEK WASHINGTON, D.C.

USET held its 2015 Impact Week in Washington, D.C. where it received an overview of White House Domestic Policy, updates from U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services Indian Health Service, Justice, Indian Education, and Veterans Affairs. USET Tribal leadership made visits to members of Congress during the week to discuss issues ranging from economic development, taxation, trust modernization, Indian budget, climate change, Carcieri Fix, and Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) reauthorization. Involvement of Tribal youth and cultural awareness are also focal points of Impact Week. During Impact Week, USET honored Miccosukee Chairman Buffalo Tiger.



2015 USET Semi-Annual Meeting Hosted by the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation

The Flame is passed from the Oneida Indian Nation to the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation



Three days of meetings and activities were hosted by the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, from May 18 through 20. Leaders from USET's 26 member Tribal Nations held dialogue on economic development, healthcare, Trust Asset Reform, taxation, and climate change. Specifically, there were discussions on efforts to create a regional comprehensive economic development strategy,



the Affordable Care Act, how to reduce prescription drug abuse, and Tribal historic preservation. USET also honored distinguished veterans during the meeting.

2015 Annual Meeting Hosted by Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

*The Flame is passed from the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation
to the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians*

Leadership from USET's 26 member Tribal Nations met in Choctaw, Mississippi October 23 through October 25. Tribal Chief Phylliss Anderson and USET President Brian Patterson helped lead discussions on the federal-Tribal trust relationship, the present day effects of the Doctrine of Discovery, the impacts of the U.S. Supreme Court and federal district court decisions on inherent sovereignty of Tribal Nations, and how to expand and further develop Tribal economies. During the meeting, Poarch Band of Creek Indians Tribal Council member Eddie Tullis was honored for service as an armed forces veteran, and USET Deputy Director Wanda Janes was honored for 20 years of service to USET. Former USET Executive Director Osley B. "Butch" Saunooke, Jr. was honored as the Earl J. Barbry, Sr. Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.



USET Board of Directors Officers

USET Officers are elected by the Board of Directors to a two year term as President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Officers serve as the USET Executive Officers Committee (EOC). The current USET EOC is serving the 2014-2016 term. USET would like to thank Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana Tribal Council Member Brenda Lintinger for her service as Secretary from October 2010 through October 2015. Mohegan Tribal Chief Lynn Malerba will complete the term as Secretary.



President: Brian Patterson
(Bear Clan Representative,
Oneida Indian Nation)



Secretary: Dr. Lynn Malerba
(Tribal Chief,
The Mohegan Tribe)



Vice President: Randy Noka
(Councilman,
Narragansett Indian Tribe)



Treasurer: Kirk Francis
(Tribal Chief,
Penobscot Indian Nation)

POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

Upholding Federal Indian Law & Policy

This year brought a number of challenges to well-established federal Indian law, regulation, and practice. USET has met these challenges with strong Congressional testimony providing the legal basis for such fundamental policies as federal recognition via the Executive Branch and the land-into-trust process via the Indian Reorganization Act. USET will continue to stand by these foundational tenets of the trust relationship, ensuring their preservation and even application to all Tribal Nations across the United States.



Trust Modernization

In collaboration with others in Indian Country, USET has developed a set of Trust Modernization Principles and Strategies aimed at advancing and improving the Trust relationship between Tribal Nations and the federal government. After living in an era of self-determination for nearly 40 years, USET, along with other inter-tribal organizations and Tribal Nations across the United States, seeks to advance to the next level and is calling for a new paradigm in the trust relationship. On July 8th before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, former USET Secretary, Brenda Lintinger, called for the establishment of a trust model that reflects a true nation-to-nation partnership built upon diplomacy. Modernizing this relationship will strengthen federal trust administration, enhance federal-tribal relations, and promote and protect Tribal sovereignty, all with the goal of building and sustaining prosperous Tribal Nation communities.



Economic Development

Economic sovereignty is essential to Indian Country's ability to be self-determining and self-sufficient. Rebuilding our Tribal Nations includes a restoration of our Tribal economies as a core element of independent nationhood. In order to achieve economic success, revenues (taxes) and profits (business enterprises) must stay within Indian Country in order to benefit from the economic development multiplier effect. USET is aggressively seeking the removal of barriers to and the issuance of policies that would spur economic development, including the decision in *Carcieri v. Salazar*, the Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act, and comprehensive tax reform.

• Tax Reform

Inconsistent federal taxation policies and state intrusions throughout Indian Country has made adverse impacts to Tribal Nations' ability to generate revenue and exercise self-governance. Many of these policies and intrusions fails to recognize and give proper respect for Tribal sovereignty. Tax reform is needed in order to treat Tribal Nations in a manner consistent with their governmental status. USET has identified the elements of a comprehensive tax reform platform for Indian Country and is advocating for its inclusion in any tax reform Congress undertakes.



• Carcieri Fix

Six years after the Supreme Court decision in *Carcieri v. Salazar*, USET remains a strong advocate for a fix. On March 24, 2015, USET participated in a Senate Committee on Indian Affairs roundtable aimed at exploring a way forward. The ability to be secure within our own homelands and the right to restore our Tribal homelands are fundamental to the exercise of Tribal sovereignty. USET is committed to ensuring that each federally recognized Tribal Nation shares equally in these rights.



Health

Indian Country, including the citizens of USET Tribal Nations, continues to suffer from lower health status and lower health outcomes than the rest of the United States. As long as the Indian Health Service (IHS) is drastically underfunded, this reality will remain. That is why USET has continued to advocate for the full funding of IHS, as well as innovative ways to stabilize and extend funding, including advance appropriations and Medicare-like rates of payment for IHS. As the implementation of the Affordable Care Act continues, USET is working diligently to ensure that the law is implemented in a way that reflects the unique trust relationship between Tribal Nations and the United States. This includes working with the Obama Administration to apply the law's employer mandate appropriately.



Indian Budget

USET unanimously supports efforts to increase and fully fund Federal Indian programs and to shield them from sequestration. With IHS and the Bureau of Indian Affairs funded at approximately half of need, the federal government is failing to meet its obligations to Indian Country. Through its work on the IHS Budget Formulation and Tribal Interior Budget Council workgroups, as well as advocacy on Capitol Hill, USET continues its work on achieving appropriations that are reflective of the federal trust responsibility and obligations. This includes the full funding of Contract Support Costs, as well as advocacy on shifting Indian programs from the discretionary to the mandatory side of the federal budget.



Sacred Sites

The protection of our places of worship is central to our religion, spirituality, and the preservation of our culture. USET has collaborated with member Tribal Nations to ensure that as the federal government engages in energy and other types of development, our most holy places are protected and preserved. In addition, USET stands with our Apache relatives as they fight a Land Exchange Bill transferring sacred lands to foreign corporations. “Save Oak Flat” is committed to challenging a congressional giveaway of federal forest service lands held sacred and as a place of worship to the San Carlos Apache. In a calculated move, proponents of the deal inserted a rider into a must-pass bill and a dangerous precedent was initiated.



Litigation

- **Dollar General v. Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians**

USET continues to engage the judicial branch as challenges to Tribal sovereignty are brought through the courts. In 2015, the Supreme Court agreed to hear oral arguments on *Dollar General v. Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians*. The case concerns whether a Tribal Court has jurisdiction over tort claims brought by a Tribal citizen against a non-Indian corporation based on the consensual relationship between the store owned by Dollar General and the Tribal Nations. As has become typical with Supreme Court cases, the decision has the potential for wide-ranging impacts on Tribal jurisdiction, Tribal courts, and Tribal sovereignty. USET has been a leader on an amicus brief in support of Tribal jurisdiction over non-Indians and the ability of Tribal courts to fair adjudicate tort suits in these cases.

- **Alabama v. Poarch Band of Creek Indians Gaming Authority**

On September 3, 2015, the Poarch Band of Creek Indians secured an important victory in the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals in a decision that affirmed the Tribal Nation's sovereign immunity and its right to take land into trust. USET supported the Poarch Band by filing an amicus curiae brief in the case, *State of Alabama v. PCI Gaming Authority*.

- **USET/Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe Amicus Brief**

In addition, USET continues to work to beat back new challenges to Tribal Nations' right to take land into trust and limit the impact of the *Carcieri* decision. On December 24, 2015, USET filed an amicus brief with the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe in support of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe in its case now pending before the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, the first *Carcieri* related case to reach the D.C. Circuit. Brief of United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. and Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe as Amici Curiae in Support of Intervenor-Appellee Supporting Affirmance was filed in 2015.

USET Staff Service Awards

During 2015 USET honored various members of the staff for dedicated years of continuous service:

10 Years of Service



Staff Accountant
Tammy Fowler



Senior Project Coordinator II
Harrell French



Computer Support Specialist
John Miller

5 Years of Service



Executive Director
Kitcki Carroll



Technical Assistance Specialist
Scott Williams

TRIBAL HEALTH PROGRAM SUPPORT

The USET THPS department's mission is to provide health and policy information, technical assistance and training to USET member Tribal Nations. THPS has demonstrated leadership throughout Indian Country through its trusted personnel, strong network of contacts and existing partnerships and processes to support Tribal self-determination and sovereignty. THPS includes highly qualified staff responsible for managing a variety of program offerings, including Health Policy, a Tribal Epidemiology Center, the USET-Vanderbilt University Native American Research Center for Health, a Diabetes Program, Tribal Data Improvement & Health Informatics Program, a Dental Support Center, and the Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country grant program.

USET Hosts Best Practices Conference

During 2015, USET hosted a Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Best Practices Conference at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Hollywood, FL. Health Directors, GPRA coordinators, data coordinators, and medical providers from 19 Tribal Nations shared strategies for improving their performance on GPRA measures. The next conference will take place in the summer of 2016 at the Seneca Niagara Casino and Hotel in Niagara Falls, NY.



Ongoing Outreach and Education on the Affordable Care Act

USET outreach and education to member Tribal Nations on the Affordable Care Act placed focus on the Employer Mandates. USET worked with White House officials, the Indian Health Service, the Department of Treasury, and the Internal Revenue Service to find a long-term solution to the Employer Mandate penalties within the ACA and how it applies to Tribal Nations. In addition to a long-term policy fix, USET has provided Webinars and other informational presentations to promote compliance with the requirements in the Affordable Care Act.



USET Receives 5 year funding from the CDC

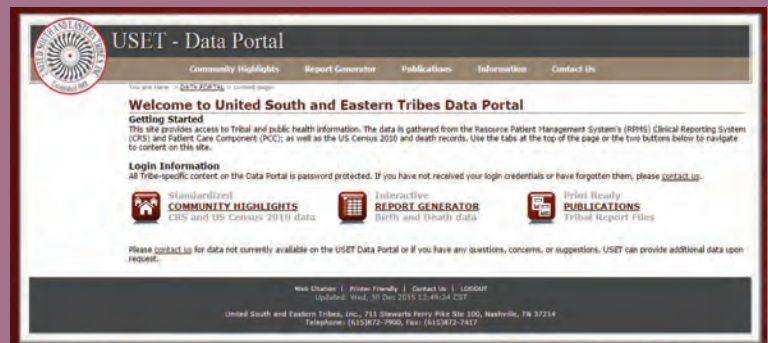
USET received a five year \$1 million per year cooperative agreement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The purpose of the funding is to assist Tribal Nations in preventing and controlling chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes. As part of this effort, seven USET-member Tribal Nations (Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, Jena Band of Choctaw, Poarch Band of Creek Indians, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut, Shinnecock Indian Nation, and Seneca Nation of Indians) received sub-awards through a competitive process to conduct community health assessments in year one. All USET Tribal Nations were also invited to participate in Community Health Assessment trainings.

Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country: Tobacco Use

USET received supplemental funding for the original CDC and Prevention Good Health and Wellness grant aimed at assessing tobacco policies, use, and prevention for non-ceremonial tobacco use. One of the intentions is to align the goals and objectives of commercial tobacco use and prevention within Indian Country with the Healthy People 2020 goal to reduce illness, disability, and death related to tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure. In addition, Tribal Nations will evaluate the programs and policies they implemented during the 4-year funding cycle.

Health Data Portal Launches Additional Capabilities

USET has received funding from the Office of Minority Health for the past 3 years to construct an internet-based health data portal for USET Tribal Nations. The purpose of the portal is to provide Tribal Nations with a tool they can use to access data specific to the health status of their Tribal citizens. This data can then be used for the purposes of health program and prevention planning and funding proposals. A tracking tool validates that the portal is being used by Tribal Nations. During its peak quarter-to-date, the portal had 1,789 user sessions. Next steps include adding Tribal Nations-specific mortality data and continuing to provide trainings to demonstrate enhancements and to introduce new staff to the portal.



Dental Support Center (DSC) Makes Big Impact with Mini-Awards

The USET Dental Support Center assists Tribal Nations with collecting, analyzing, and developing reports on oral health status as a part of health promotion/disease prevention (HPDP) program evaluations. During 2015, USET made mini funding awards available to HPDP programs through the Dental Support Center to promote positive impacts in oral health. All USET Members are encouraged to apply for DSC mini-awards in the future.



USET and Penobscot Indian Nation Develops Important Child Safety and Breastfeeding Initiative

During 2015, USET worked with the Penobscot Indian Nation on projects to normalize breastfeeding through education of their Tribal citizens. The projects assisted the Penobscot Indian Nation in increasing their breastfeeding rate from 20% to 80%. Because of the success of these initiatives, the Penobscot Indian Nation and USET partnered to share this information to all of Indian Country. Two educational project videos were created, which are available on USET's YouTube channel.



USET Hosts Annual National Tribal Epidemiology Meeting in Nashville

This spring, USET had the privilege of sponsoring the annual Tribal Epidemiology Center (TEC) meeting in Nashville. This meeting is a requirement of the Indian Health Service TEC Co-Operative Agreement funding for the TEC's. The TEC Directors, along with many of their staff, convened for three days to discuss important Indian Country health related issues including: data and surveillance, Tribal/state/Federal cooperation, indigenous methods, and more. The staff shared best practices for various projects.



USET Annual Diabetes Meeting a Success

The USET Annual Diabetes Coordinator and Nutritionist Meeting was held at Mississippi Band of Choctaw on September 22-23, 2015. This year's meeting offered several continuing education credits to participants, and discussion focused on diabetes education and best practices. This year's meeting also offered the opportunity to tour the new health facility at Mississippi Band of Choctaw.



Health Program Evaluation Support Now Available

This year has been monumental for USET in the area of health program evaluation. Because we've added several new staff members for the Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country project funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, evaluation training and capacity building opportunities are increasingly available for all area Tribal Nations. More than half of all USET Tribal Nations have participated in on-site health program evaluation training and at least 8 have started or completed a comprehensive community health assessment. These efforts have also lead to organic community partnerships for our Tribal Nations.



YOUTH AC



Close Up Foundation Tribal Youth Summit

Tribal youth are the future leaders and mentors of the next seven generations. The Close-Up Foundation developed a Tribal Youth Summit in Washington, D.C. to help foster positive development and delve deeper into youth's passion to enhance and renovate their communities. USET has partnered with Close-Up during our Impact Week to further encourage our Tribal youth's energy and commitment to progress in rebuilding their Tribal Nations. USET is proud to be a part of their further understanding of how current Tribal leadership efforts impact national policy and legislation in Indian Country.

CTIVITIES



Vanderbilt University Aspirnaut Program

USET and Vanderbilt University Medical Center have maintained a strong partnership to provide educational opportunity for Tribal youth through the Aspirnaut Summer Research Internship program. Students who participate in the Aspirnaut internship are given a hands-on and mentored laboratory experience for a six week period of research and development. The research can range from developing new drug treatments for diabetes to engineering new devices for medical use. The Aspirnaut Summer Research Internship is designed to give high school and college age students from rural areas with strong academic backgrounds an opportunity to gain greater understanding about science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) related fields of research and how they bring benefit to the world.



OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

OERM has established strong capabilities to provide member Tribal Nations with technical assistance and training, logistical support, policy analysis and advocacy, and outreach and communication with partners ranging from federal agencies, Tribal organizations, academia, and the private sector. OERM has become nationally recognized for its drinking water and wastewater certification program, being the first Tribal organization approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and for environmental program expertise, especially related to the Clean Water Act and environmental risk assessment modeling. OERM has broadened its array of program services to include food sovereignty, climate change adaptation, sustainable energy development, and protection of sacred sites and cultural resources.

USET Tribal Utility Summit

The Sixth Annual Tribal Utility Summit (TUS) was hosted this year in Rock Hill, South Carolina by the Catawba Indian Nation. TUS is a training and continuing educational program for operators and managers overseeing Tribal drinking water, waste water, solid waste utility, infrastructure, and public safety, which is cooperatively supported by USET, EPA, and the Nashville Area Office of Indian Health Service (IHS). The mission of improving and protecting a healthy and safe quality of life is the theme of the TUS.



USET Integrated Pest Management

OERM continued its work with Cherokee Schools (Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians) to develop a report on Integrated Pest Management (IPM). USET's report to the school noted areas that it needed to address and gave consultation on how to implement solutions. By the end of 2015, Cherokee Schools had implemented 95% of the recommendations. The IPM was supported by the EPA. USET Senior Project Coordinator Steve Terry, EPA's Pat Livingston, and Cherokee High School's Hilda Queen worked on the IPM project.



Your Environment/Your Health

USET held training sessions for Tribal environmental and health professionals to examine issues and problems in their community and how they may collaborate to develop and implement solutions. Two separate trainings were held during the year entitled “Your Environment/Your Health” and “Uniting Your Environment and Health.” A major portion of the sessions dealt with tabletop exercises on community environment and health. OERM partnered with Tribal Health Program Support to conduct the training and utilized Tribal-Focused Environmental Risk and Sustainability Tool support from EPA.



NTWC Meetings

The National Tribal Water Council (NTWC), which includes USET representatives, met twice in 2015 with Acting Assistant Administrator for EPA of the Office of Water, Ken Kopocis. In the course of the meeting there were two major actions taken by EPA as a direct result of past input from the NTWC. These actions were to give Tribal authorities the same abilities as states to determine impaired waters and achieve EPA approved water quality standards with greater ease. EPA introduced a new initiative, Baseline Water Quality Standards for Tribes, which is supported by the NTWC. USET is currently working with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians to implement water quality standards.



Protecting and Preserving Native Plants

OERM is working with the North Carolina Arboretum and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians on a pilot seed project. The objective is to identify and collect species of plants that have been traditionally utilized by Tribal Nations. During 2015, almost 100 seed specimens were identified, collected, and stored for future use and study.



Climate Change

OERM has been in the planning and development stages of building resources and creating services so USET may assist Tribal Nations with facing the challenges of climate change. The goal for the USET climate change initiative is to help protect Tribal homelands and promote a healthy future environment. OERM has been working with its member Tribal Nations to conduct vulnerability assessments and identify adaptation measures that will eventually become working plans and core program services for Indian Country.



USET Committees Participate in Tribal Disaster Shelter Preparedness Seminar

The USET Tribal Emergency Services Committee conducted a Shelter Operations Seminar during the Semi-Annual Meeting at the Mashantucket Pequot Fire and Police Department Emergency Operations Center. The open-ended discussion that was facilitated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency Tribal Liaisons brought approximately 85 members of the Tribal Emergency Services, Tribal Justice, Transportation, Social Services, Tribal Administration and Education Committees together to share insights into disaster pre-planning, notification, response and recovery.

USET Promotes Healthy Environment from Sea to Shining Sea

OERM has built a partnership with Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians to develop bi-coastal climate adaptation workshops. The goal for this collaborative effort is to reach the greatest number of Tribal Nations, make a strong and lasting impact with shared resources, and develop models of training and technical assistance that can be used with other Tribal Nations. USET is working with other inter-tribal and private sector organizations and agencies to develop similar partnerships in environmental initiatives.

Tribal Nations Obtain Waste Water Treatment Plant Operator Certifications

During 2015 waste water treatment plant operators from Saint Regis Mohawk and Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians became wholly trained and certified through USET. USET's certification program for Tribal Nations includes training courses, proctored testing, and bestows certifications on operators who successfully complete courses and pass examinations. The certifications assist Tribal Nations with maintaining qualified utility operators to assure efficient operations and promote Tribal sovereignty.



DEVELOPMENT

USET ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development is a priority for the USET Board of Directors and its member Tribal Nations. Developing a new economic development core competency that will create regional resources to assist with business development and strengthening Tribal economies is key. The overall goals are to complement USET's efforts to rebuild Tribal Nations, promote sovereignty, and self-determination.

USET Creates a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

To help guide the new Economic Development core competency, USET has created a five year comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS). The CEDS was developed through a series of site visits, interviews, and surveys to outline the needed resources, priorities for development, asset identification, regional collaboration opportunities, and funding plan. The creation of CEDS was funded by the U.S. Department of Agricultural Rural Business Opportunity Grant program.



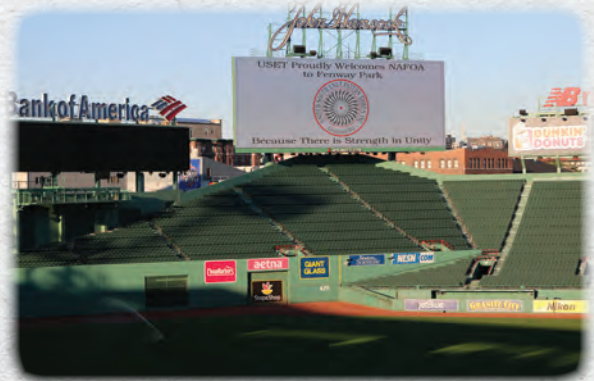
USET Partners with Economic Development Administration (EDA)

USET and the U.S. Department of Commerce EDA partnered to form a new Economic Development core competency within the organization. The EDA investment funds will enable USET to provide services to its member Tribal Nations, served by the (EDA) Philadelphia regional office. USET will assist with capacity building, strategic planning, technical assistance, training, education, and other resources, bringing together the public and private sectors to support the Tribal Nations' shared economic goals. This project will address the need for enhanced opportunities to access capital and other critical services to empower and promote economic development and growth. USET will also utilize EDA investment funds to hire an Economic Development Director and create a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI).



USET to Develop a New Regional CDFI

During 2015 USET was selected as a recipient of U.S. Treasury Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Technical Assistance funding to create a new regional CDFI. During the next two years, USET, as a sponsoring entity, will establish a new organization to help its member Tribal Nations gain access to capital and credit, receive training and technical assistance, build business infrastructure, collect data, establish regional partnerships and collaboration, and create new capacity for economic development. The new CDFI will also build upon existing and newly created strategic alliance partnerships.



USET and Native Diversification Network-Procurement Technical Assistance Center (NDN-PTAC)



Through its strategic alliance partnership, USET and NDN-PTAC are working to assist Tribal businesses with 8(a), HUBZone, and Disadvantage Business Enterprise applications. NDN-PTAC assists Tribal Nations with training to prepare winning business proposals, strategic planning, building business partnerships, and networking with government (local, Tribal, state, and federal) procurement officials.

USET and Small Business Administration (SBA)

USET and SBA worked to increase business opportunities for Indian Country during 2015. USET assisted with events to bring awareness of business opportunities, need for resources, and existing assets throughout Indian Country. In the fall, USET and SBA worked cooperatively to promote the American Supplier Initiative Focus on Veterans and Native Americans in Atlanta. The program provided insight to developing partnerships, increasing business capacity, seizing opportunity, and obtaining certification for Native-owned businesses.



DEVELOPMENT

USET DEVELOPMENT

USET Development works to increase and diversify revenue and resources to help build a more risk adverse and efficient organization. Development also explores new initiatives in organizational planning, growth, and leadership development. Development helps assure USET's growth and development to deliver the value expected by its Board of Directors, USET member Tribal Nations, stakeholders, and the organizational staff.

Development Adds a New Grant Writer-Coordinator

The USET Development Department has grown to include a new Grant Writer-Coordinator. During the spring of 2015, Tim Hooper was hired as the new Grant Writer-Coordinator to help USET develop more proposals for funding from grantors, oversee grant administration processes, and help maintain grant compliance. The new grant administration process, which Tim has helped implement, will promote increased and diversified funding for USET.



USET Development Helps Gain Year-end Grant Funding

USET enjoys strong working relationships with our federal program partners. The great relations and diligent delivery of service by USET has helped increase grant revenue during 2015. USET was the recipient of more than \$250,000 above and beyond its requested funding from grants and contracts. USET programs worked with Development to respond quickly and effectively to federal program managers who were seeking proposals to obligate year-end funding. The additional funds help USET build its capacity to serve its member Tribal Nations.

USET Development Presents at GPA Conference

Securing grant funds to support and grow Tribal Nation projects continues to be a competitive process. Being active and networking among grant writing peers is one of the best strategies to help improve your professional skill-sets. Tim Hooper, USET's Grant Writer-Coordinator, attended and presented at the Grant Professional Association's (GPA) 2015 annual conference in Saint Louis, which included Native American grant professionals.



Resource Development: Long Term Strategic Planning for USET (2017 - 2021)

To help USET build new capacity and infrastructure to support its mission of rebuilding Tribal Nations and promoting sovereignty, Development has begun efforts to create a new five year organizational strategy. The organizational strategy will help build the capacity of existing initiatives of health, environment, economic development, and policy and legislation as well as identify opportunities for developing new resources to serve member Tribal Nations. The new five year organizational strategy, to serve as a guide for Fiscal Year 2017-2021, will be completed in 2016 to be utilized at the end of USET's FY 14-16 Long Term Strategic Plan.



Exploring Business Development Opportunities

USET created a business plan during 2014 and 2015 to create services to Tribal health and medical providers to increase revenue. USET is working to develop training, technical assistance, and support services to Tribal Nations that will help build their capacity to meet meaningful use metrics for electronic health records and government performance results measures.

New USET App

To help you remain informed on organizational activities and events taking place throughout Indian Country, USET created a smartphone app during 2015. The app provides information on USET events, news and information regarding member Tribal Nations, and Indian Country issues. Android users may find the app in the Google app store and iPhone users may find it in the Apple app store. It is a free download and we hope you carry us with you and stay in touch with Indian Country.



Development Makes Tribal Site Visits

In an effort to learn more about the Tribal activities, needs, and priorities, Development visited with 15 Tribes, including Tribal leadership, program managers, and Tribal citizens. From time to time we were able to enjoy local festivals, heritage activities, and events.





Osley B. “Butch” Saunooke, Jr.

2015 Earl J. Barbry, Sr. Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient

During the 2015 Annual Meeting, USET recognized and honored Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians citizen and former USET Executive Director Osley B. Saunooke, Jr. as the 2015 recipient of the Earl J. Barbry, Sr. Lifetime Achievement Award. This honor is given in recognition of his help to USET, his Tribal Nation, and many USET members to build resources to overcome challenges.

During the presentation of the 2015 Earl J. Barbry, Sr. Lifetime Achievement Award to the Osley B. Saunooke, Jr. Family, Tribal leadership shared their memories and how he assisted Tribal Nations. Seminole Tribe of Florida Chairman James Billie and Poarch Band of Creek Indians Council Member Eddie Tullis (former USET President) spoke at the presentation.

The Saunooke family accepted the award and honor on his behalf. Butch, to his friends and son to Chief of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Osley Bird Saunooke, Jr. was 71 when he left us for the spirit world. His life was full of deliberate actions to further Tribal Nation self-determination and economic success. Following a long line of leaders in his family, Mr. Saunooke’s guidance and motivation created an enduring impact which not only held benefits for his Tribal Nation, but for all of Indian Country. With his steadfast dedication and commitment to promoting and furthering education and advancement opportunities that created economic and social transformation, Mr. Saunooke’s efforts will have lasting impacts for generations to come. It is for these reasons Mr. Saunooke was bestowed with this USET honor.

USET recognizes individuals who have demonstrated exemplary leadership, courage, and dedication to the organization and to its member Tribal Nations, which promotes its mission and statement of unity to ensure future generations are Together, Stronger, and Transcending. USET recognizes these individuals with the Earl J. Barbry, Sr. Lifetime Achievement Award.



USET Honors Deputy Director Wanda Janes

20 years of Dedicated Service

During the 2015 Annual Board of Directors Meeting in Mississippi, USET Deputy Director Wanda Janes, the longest serving employee in USET history was honored. Wanda celebrated her 20th anniversary in mid-September and reminisced on her years of assisting USET staff and Tribal leaders achieve success in their work making Indian Country a better place. Part of her legacy is leadership through service. Throughout her years with the organization, she has created lasting memories for attendees of USET meetings with her proficient, skillful organization of the events.

“I think USET has many good things ahead of it. I am very proud to have been a part of what we have been able to develop. There have been some rough times. But overall the good times have outnumbered those days,” Wanda said before the USET staff.

“Wanda’s role here has evolved substantially during the years. It is very rare that you find someone who is committed and dedicated to an organization for as long as Wanda has. She has been open to the changes and embraces the work this organization is committed to doing, because at her heart she knows what this work is all about and has great passion for it. I could not ask for a better deputy than Wanda. I know our USET member Tribal Nations have nothing but the utmost respect for her and they express this to me all the time. We appreciate all the work she has done and will continue to do for USET,” USET Executive Director Kitcki Carroll stated.

“One of the greatest things we did was hiring Wanda Janes,” said USET President Emeritus Keller George during the 2015 Annual Meeting and honoring of Janes.

Wanda’s immediate family, husband Ricky, and daughter Tiffany Janes, who works for Poarch Band of Creek Indians in the their environmental dept., were on hand to witness USET’s honoring activities.

Thank you Wanda for your 20 years of service to USET and your passion to make Indian Country a better place!



New Faces and Promotions at USET

USET adds a new Grant Writer-Coordinator to the Development Department

During the spring, Tim Hooper joined the team as the new Grant Writer-Coordinator. Tim is a certified grant writer and has been a proposal reviewer for various grant programs. Prior to joining the USET team, he was a grant writer for Tennessee State University.



USET's Jasmine Alvarado McClain promoted to the position of Health Project Administrator

In her new role with THPS, Jasmine will be responsible for coordinating various projects and the teams assigned to them. This includes projects from a variety of funding sources. Jasmine started with USET in August 2008 as Administrative Assistant in our OERM.



USET hires Hilary Andrews to serve as the Health Policy Analyst

This year Hilary Andrews (citizen of the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head) was hired as the Health Policy Analyst for the THPS. Hilary is responsible for reviewing, analyzing, and providing reports regarding health programs, regulations and legislation associated with the Department of Health and Human Services and related agencies, specifically the Indian Health Service.



USET's Jennifer Bennett promoted to the position of OERM Administrative Assistant II

In her new role with OERM, Jennifer will be responsible for providing office support for daily operations. Her duties will also include assisting with organizing the logistics for meetings and maintaining databases. Jennifer began her work with OERM in January 2015.



USET hires Malisa Williams as new Accounting Clerk

During the winter, Malisa Williams was hired as an Accounting Clerk within the USET Accounting Department. Malisa performs all phases of accounting associated with the efficient fiscal management of all programs and accounts administered by USET. Malisa is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation.



USET welcomes back a familiar face to serve as Health Communication Specialist

Angela Davis has been hired as USET's new Health Communication Specialist. Angela has worked in various capacities for USET in the past. Her continued contributions in her position and the wealth of knowledge regarding USET member Tribal Nations are great assets to the team.



USET adds a Health Program Evaluation Coordinator in THPS

Cameron Chase has been hired as the Health Program Evaluation Coordinator within the THPS Department. Cameron's responsibilities will include working closely with THPS personnel to plan, implement, and coordinate evaluation activities for the program under the current Center for Disease Control and Prevention grant, which was recently awarded to USET.



USET THPS hires Emilee Thomas as new Administrative Assistant

Emilee Thomas joined the USET team and family during the spring. Emilee has been hired as the Administrative Assistant I within the THPS Department. She is responsible for office support to maintain smooth daily operations.



USET welcomes a new Systems Analyst in THPS

Mark Withers was hired during the spring as the new THPS Systems Analyst. Mark is responsible for overall technical support to the THPS Department and operating a help desk to provide technical support to Tribal Nations.



USET hires Tori Reaves as new Epidemiologist

Tori Reaves joined the USET team and family during the spring. Ms. Reaves is serving as USET's newest Epidemiologist I within our THPS Department. Tori works to investigate patterns and cause of injury, as well as seeking to reduce risk of negative health outcomes through research, community education, and health policy.



USET hires Marta Reczko as Technical Assistance Specialist in OERM

Marta Reczko was hired in the winter to serve as the new Technical Assistance Specialist in OERM. Marta is responsible for inventory and financial management training and technical assistance for Tribal water and waste water utility operations.



Two USET Staff Earn Degrees

During 2015 two USET Staff members earned higher education degrees. USET Dental Support Center Director Jenna Middlebrooks earned a Doctorate of Public Health from East Tennessee State University. Development Director Brandon Stephens earned his Masters of Business Administration from the University of Tennessee.





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Member Tribes



- 1 **Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians**
Cherokee, North Carolina
- 2 **Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida**
Miami, Florida
- 3 **Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians**
Choctaw, Mississippi
- 4 **Seminole Tribe of Florida**
Hollywood, Florida
- 5 **Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana**
Charenton, Louisiana
- 6 **Seneca Nation of Indians**
Salamanca, New York
- 7 **Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana**
Elton, Louisiana
- 8 **Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe**
Hogansburg, New York
- 9 **Penobscot Indian Nation**
Indian Island, Maine

- 10 **Passamaquoddy Tribe—Pleasant Point**
Perry, Maine
- 11 **Passamaquoddy Tribe—Indian Township**
Princeton, Maine
- 12 **Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians**
Littleton, Maine
- 13 **Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana**
Marksville, Louisiana
- 14 **Poarch Band of Creek Indians**
Atmore, Alabama

- 15 **Narragansett Indian Tribe**
Charlestown, Rhode Island
- 16 **Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation**
Mashantucket, Connecticut
- 17 **Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah)**
Aquinnah, Massachusetts
- 18 **Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas**
Livingston, Texas
- 19 **Oneida Indian Nation**
Verona, New York
- 20 **Aroostook Band of Micmacs**
Presque Isle, Maine
- 21 **Catawba Indian Nation**
Rock Hill, South Carolina
- 22 **Jena Band of Choctaw Indians**
Jena, Louisiana
- 23 **The Mohegan Tribe**
Uncasville, Connecticut
- 24 **Cayuga Nation**
Seneca Falls, New York
- 25 **Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe**
Mashpee, Massachusetts
- 26 **Shinnecock Indian Nation**
Southampton, New York
- 27 **USET**
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