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Native American women take part in the 26th Annual Paiute Tribe Pow Wow in Las Vegas, Nevada. (Kobby Dagan/Shutterstock)

# What is being written: Hi, Nevadans!

We're halfway through Native American Heritage Month, so I'm bringing back this piece <u>highlighting some of Nevada's tribal communities</u> and groups working to preserve Indigenoushistory.

Jannelle Calderón

Newsletter Editor, The Nevadan / El Nevadense

## 7 groups helping Indigenous tribes in Nevada keep their traditions alive

Local groups like Nuwu Art and Indigenous AF are strengthening tribes in Nevada through art, culture, and community support.

Indigenous tribes in Nevada have spanned tens of thousands of years, and although they've faced challenges ranging from decolonization to cultural erosion, several local organizations are devoted to preserving their traditions.

The Silver State is home to nearly 53,000 American Indian and Alaska Native residents (1.7 percent of the total population), as well as many mixed-race Native Americans, according to <u>U.S.</u> Census estimates. The <u>University of Nevada, Reno</u>, puts that number at 62,000.

With 21 <u>federally recognized Indigenous tribes</u>, there are 28 separate reservations, bands, colonies, and community councils. The five larger tribes that all of the Great Basin Tribes in Nevada identify with are:

- Numa (Northern Paiute)
- Newe (Western Shoshone)
- Nuwuvi (Southern Paiute)
- Wá·šiw (Washoe)
- Mojave People (including Ft. Mojave and the Pipa Aha Macav)

Nevada has several Indigenous organizations and community groups that support, empower, and <u>celebrate Indigenous people</u>, not just on Indigenous Peoples' Day in October, but all 365 days of the year. Here are seven local groups dedicated to preserving and supporting the traditions and cultures of tribes in Nevada.

#### 1. Nuwu Art Las Vegas

A community hub and creative sanctuary for the cultural arts, Las Vegas-based <u>Nuwu Art + Activism Studios</u>, 1331 S. Maryland Pkwy., partners with other grassroots and nonprofit Indigenous groups to uplift and strengthen the community through the arts, activism, and education. Nuwu Art also advocates for the equity of Indigenous communities.

Started by Southern Paiute artist Fawn Douglas, the studio and community center offers spaces for artists, businesses, and non-profits to operate and collaborate. Activities on site include art exhibits, educational events, and cultural consulting—anything that promotes, maintains, and revives cultural traditions in Native American, African American, Latinx/Indigenous American, and other communities of color.

#### 2. IndigenousAF Las Vegas

An empowering and uplifting non-profit, <u>Indigenous AF</u> has been promoting a flourishing Indigenous community in Southern Nevada since 2020. This majority Native-led group is focused on strengthening Indigenous traditions, education, and identity, while creating community opportunities, primarily through free public arts projects and activities. It is also devoted to promoting local artists, performers, and knowledge keepers while providing a space where the community can connect and grow.

Indigenous AF sponsors community workshops on Nuwu Art, featuring traditional basket weaving, storytelling, and cloth badge sewing, as well as monthly Final Fridays events that showcase authentic food, music, and art at the Nuwu Art + Activism Studios. Those interested in getting involved can become members or support the group by purchasing clothing, tote bags, greeting cards, art prints, and more, featuring original designs by Indigenous artists, on the Indigenous AF website.

Indigenous AF recently received a grant from The Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts, an organization devoted to advancing innovations in the visual arts and preserving Warhol's legacy.

#### 3. Tribal Minds, Inc. Reno

Originating on the Hungry Valley Indian Reservation, a tribal community in Reno-Sparks, <u>Tribal Minds</u> is focused on community development, civic engagement, and Indigenous wellness in urban, rural, and remote areas of Nevada. The Native-led nonprofit unites people, movements, academic institutions, multi-faith groups, nonprofits, foundations, and governments that are similarly dedicated to enhancing Indigenous futures, with a strong emphasis on BIPOC-led organizations.

A grassroots organization, Tribal Minds, represents the state's Indigenous roots in places where they are underserved. The group recently worked with Paramount's Content for Change division on Murals for Change, a project that brought murals by Indigenous artists to the Las Vegas Valley.

## 4. Nevada's Indian Territory Carson City

A non-profit organization and marketing arm of the Nevada Commission on Tourism, <u>Nevada's Indian Territory</u> assists American Indian organizations, Indigenous-owned businesses, and tribes in Nevada in encouraging sustainable Indigenous tourism. The goal is to improve quality of life, strengthen cultural awareness, support inclusion, and respect the cultural identity of Indigenous people in the Great Basin.

Nevada's Indian Territory aims to expand Indigenous tourism opportunities and educate the public on protecting, preserving, and respecting traditional American Indian arts and cultural resources. The group has developed an app to help visitors plan a variety of adventures related to Indigenous culture, including events, experiences, and itineraries for tours of Indigenous sites throughout the state.

#### 5. Native American Alliance Las Vegas, Henderson, North Las Vegas

Open to those interested in learning more about tribal culture, the College of Southern Nevada (CSN) <u>Native American Alliance</u> works with the college's Office of Inclusive Learning & Engagement to provide services and support to Indigenous students, faculty, and staff. It unites Indigenous students and promotes recruitment and retention, while also providing education on Indigenous cultures and experiences.

The alliance's webpage provides links to resources, including scholarships and financial aid for Indigenous students.

#### 6. Office of Indigenous Relations Reno

The University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) Office of Indigenous Relations serves students, faculty, and the community, fostering a supportive and inclusive environment on campus.

A recent project of the group is the commissioning of a mural on campus by Autumn Harry, a member of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe. The <u>Great Basin Indigenous Mural</u> depicts Native American communities in Nevada throughout the years. It serves as a reminder that UNR sits on the traditional homeland of the Numu (Northern Paiute), Wašiw (Washoe), Newe (Western Shoshone), and Nuwu (Southern Paiute) peoples, paying tribute to their perspective and importance.

#### 7. Native Voters Alliance of Nevada (NVAN) Las Vegas

Indigenous communities are gaining political power in the United States, thanks in part to the <u>Native Voters Alliance Nevada</u>. The nonprofit is an advocacy organization with statewide reach, mobilizing Indigenous voices to vote and endorsing candidates who have a platform rooted in Indigenous culture and values.

The group is inclusive of underserved communities, including women, Indigenous people, and those in the LGBTQIA2S+ and BIPOC communities, educating and empowering them to take their seats at the table and effect change.

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Related: What to know about the Native American tribes that call Nevada home

https://thenevadannews.com/community/groups-traditions-tribes-in-nevada/?utm\_term=nev-fb-lead&utm\_source=Sailthru&utm\_medium=email&utm\_campaign=Nevadan%20MON%2011-17-2025

Since time immemorial, Indigenous Peoples have been the stewards of the lands and waters we all depend on — protecting ecosystems, sustaining communities, and leading the way toward balance with the Earth and climate.

**At Last Chance Alliance**, we know our fight for climate justice must honor and uphold Indigenous sovereignty. That's why we're proud to share our **Platform in Support of an** 

<u>Indigenous Just Transition</u> — a collective commitment to centering Indigenous leadership and rights in all that we do.

Created in collaboration with the Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples and guided by the Indigenous Environmental Network, this platform is rooted in principles of responsibility and relationship, sovereignty, and transformation for action.

Together, we commit to:

- Building real relationships with Indigenous Peoples and Tribal Nations in the communities where we organize.
- Rejecting tokenization and centering Indigenous leadership.
- Working alongside Indigenous partners to call on California's so-called leaders to protect our climate and respect Indigenous rights.

A true just transition must confront the colonial systems of extraction and uplift Indigenous knowledge, self-determination, and sovereignty.

We're honored to take this important step and invite you to stand with us in solidarity.

## Read our Indigenous Solidarity Platform

In solidarity, Last Chance Alliance

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**Natasha Young** Ice is now approaching the Esqualle Nation American Indians to use their land for immigrant detention centers.

## A Nightmare at the BLM

Trump's nominee to head the Bureau of Land Management may be his most extreme yet Jim Pattiz and More Than Just Parks

https://morethanjustparks.substack.com/p/a-nightmare-at-the-blm? utm\_source=share&utm\_medium=android&r=5z4zi5&triedRedirect=true

First looks Incide Colifornia's now \$600 million agains that's bigger than

<u>First look: Inside California's new \$600-million casino that's bigger than Caesars Palace</u>

**LAT, CHRISTOPHER REYNOLDS**: "Next time you're driving the Grapevine and nearing the forest of oil rigs on the outskirts of Bakersfield, look for a six-story guitar.

That would be the Hard Rock Casino Tejon, whose opening on Thursday brings industrial-strength Indian gaming — and some Hollywood pizzazz — to a territory better known for cowboy hats, farmland and petroleum extraction."

EPA moves to limit scope of clean water law to reduce amount of wetlands it covers

Congress has voted to end the government shutdown, without renewing the soon-to-expire Affordable Care Act subsidies, which help millions of people afford their monthly health insurance payments.

Already before the shutdown, about <u>a third</u> of Native peoples on Turtle Island were food insecure. As the government reopens, SNAP and WIC payments should resume, as will other programs supporting Native peoples -- though many have reduced staff.

During the federal government shutdown, the U.S. government violated its treaty responsibilities to Tribal Nations. To fill the gaps, **Tribes across Turtle Island used reserve funds to distribute food and support Tribal members as well as surrounding communities in need**.

Lisa Ansell Frazier, who runs food distribution programs on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, said:

"Look into what your ancestors did. **Go back to making relatives with people.** That sense of settler colonialism, where there's an isolation and a hierarchy that is very divisive and tiered and based on paper and material possessions -- that is not our way. **If you are healthy, then I am healthy.** [1]

Ralph Francis, who coordinates the Passamaquoddy Tribe's food pantry, said:

"No one should be ashamed of getting food for their families. This is what we do. We take care of our people."

Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. said:

"The federal government may be failing at this moment. Cherokee Nation is not."

These Tribes have shown how we can use traditional Indigenous values as a guide to coming together and living in the uncertain political conditions that we face. Here are some of their stories, by state:

#### In Montana:

We heard from family how **Blackfeet Tribal leaders** organized hunting and processing of buffalo, cattle, and elk on their reservation, which they distributed to the community. A Blackfeet Tribal Council Member also traveled across Montana and the Pacific Northwest, gathering food donations for the community.

Our partners from the **Crow Tribe** told us about their privately funded food pantry, which serves their community on their reservation. Now, white farmers in need are also using it.

The **Fort Peck Assiniboine** and **Sioux Tribes** also hunted buffalo and processed them to distribute about 12,000 pounds of meat to Tribal members

#### In Oklahoma:

The Cherokee Nation spent more than \$10 million to cover SNAP-like meal vouchers for 60,000 Tribal citizens -- as well as more than \$1 million in food bank assistance for surrounding communities in northeastern Oklahoma.

The Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes organized "food tailgates," distributing supplies to anyone in need including non-Natives.

The Choctaw Nation and the Seminole Nation set up an application system to distribute food assistance payments. Choctaw leaders also set up three meat processing facilities and extended their application deadline for holiday food vouchers.

#### In South Dakota:

The **Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe** distributed meat from about 20 of its buffalo. The Tribe has a meat processing plant that it lets other Tribes use, and it grew its food bank inventory to provide local and traditional foods.

An economic development organization based on **Rosebud Sioux Tribal I**and harvested and processed buffalo to distribute to SNAP recipients.

Our relatives at the Brave Heart Society and NOA's National Organizer in South Dakota distributed food to people in need on the Yankton Sioux Reservation. They gave away 427 food boxes, 854 lbs of buffalo, and 300 \$100 gift certificates in two days:

#### In North Dakota:

The **Fort Berthold Reservation**'s Emergency Operations Center held food distribution events and worked with the privately funded Great Plains Food Bank to distribute 40,000 pounds of food, prioritizing enrolled members on and off the reservation who use SNAP.

#### In Arizona:

The **Tohono O'odham Nation** distributed food across four locations on their reservation.

The **Navajo Nation Council** launched a public website with food access information, listing a directory of food bank and chapter distribution locations, guidance for households transitioning from SNAP to Navajo Nation food assistance programs, and contact details for immediate food support resources.

#### In Washington and California:

The **Yakama Tribe** provided emergency assistance to help Tribal members and non-Native Yakima county residents pay for bills and food. They established an emergency service center to help the broader community, including federal employees serving the Tribe. Yakama Nation Fisheries also distributed salmon. Yakama also donated loads of apples to the Blackfeet Tribe.

The **Yurok Tribe** offered its members who use SNAP and Calfresh \$300 prepaid food assistance cards, regardless of where they lived.

#### In Wisconsin:

The **Menominee Nation** created an emergency response program where Menominee hunters

in the Tribal forest shared venison with families in need, with meat being processed and distributed by the Tribe's Department of Agriculture.

#### In Wyoming:

The **Wind River Reservation** increased food orders and expanded their food distribution programs to feed families, and stocked four schools' food lodges with 40,000 pounds of food. The programs partnered with hunters, local farmers, and meat processors to fill the need.

#### In Connecticut and Maine:

The **Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation** donated \$25,000 to a local food bank serving the broader community. Tribal Chairman Rodney Butler said, "*Our community needs us.*"

Members of the **Mi'kmaq Nation** -- 80% of whom are SNAP recipients -- stocked their food bank with trout and local moose meat.

The **Passamaquoddy Pleasant Point Food Pantry** collaborated with hunters and non-Tribal programs to serve and distribute food to Tribal members, delivering food to elders, disabled people, and those without access to transportation.

In a crisis, Tribal Nations are fulfilling their ancestral responsibility to be caretakers of land and the natural world and of humanity. Our teachings are clear; to use an old labor union slogan: "Solidarity forever."

Hawwih (thank you), Judith LeBlanc (Caddo), Executive Director

#### Pot farms put tribal cultural resources at risk.

"On the eve of the 30-year anniversary of California voters legalizing medical uses of marijuana in November 1996, and the 10-year anniversary of the 2016 initiative allowing non-medical uses, it's fair to say that the social experiment's results have been mixed. California's legal cannabis industry continues to grow; it was valued at about \$5.37 billion in 2023 and was projected to maintain a compound annual growth rate of 9.4% through 2030. Consumption is continuing to increase, although wholesale prices are down 57% on average from their peak in late 2020, according to the state Department of Cannabis Control. But the industry continues to face competition from clandestine producers who bypass state regulations and taxes, poking a hole in the long-held belief that legalizing marijuana would create a steady stream of tax revenue for state governments to use for their favorite programs. ... "Read more from the Western Farm Press.

## No deal on the Colorado River despite Trump administration deadline

"After two fraught years of negotiations amid dire projections for the Colorado River's reservoirs, California and six other states that rely on the river's water have yet again failed to reach a deal — despite a federal deadline. "While more work needs to be done, collective progress has been made that warrants continued efforts to define and approve details for a finalized agreement," the states said. The written statement released Tuesday included no details about how they

plan to manage the river after the current rulebook expires at the end of next year. Officials at the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the federal stewards for the river under the Department of the Interior, have threatened to impose their own plan in the absence of a deal. "Two years. And the lack of progress, in light of how perilous the conditions are on the Colorado — it's unacceptable," said Mark Gold, former director of Water Scarcity Solutions at the Natural Resources Defense Council and a board member of the Southern California water import giant, the Metropolitan Water District "Read more from Cal Matters."

## With Upper, Lower basin states still snagged, feds give them more time to craft Colorado River plan

"Nevada and six other Colorado River states failed to reach a broad agreement Tuesday on how to share the river's dwindling water supply, missing a federally-imposed deadline after days of intense closed-door negotiations. Despite missing the deadline, the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Reclamation indicated states would be given additional time to continue negotiations after making "collective progress." "While more work needs to be done, collective progress has been made that warrants continued efforts to define and approve details for a finalized agreement," said a joint statement from the seven states, the Interior Department and the Bureau of Reclamation. ... "Read more from the Nevada Current.

## Arizona asks US to make sure Upper Basin states use less Colorado River water

"Gov. Katie Hobbs and Arizona legislative leaders from both parties asked the U.S. Interior Department Tuesday to step in and ensure any agreement to curb overuse of Colorado River water requires the river's Upper Basin states to limit their use. The letter to Interior, marking a rare moment of bipartisanship among Arizona political leaders, makes the point that given the river's importance to Arizona's economy and the 22 Arizona tribes that have river water rights, "We find it alarming that the Upper Basin states have refused to implement any binding, verifiable water supply reductions." "This extreme negotiating posture — four of the seven basin states refusing to participate in any sharing of water shortages — has led to a fundamental impasse that is preventing the successful development of a 7-state consensus plan for management of the Colorado River," said the letter, sent Tuesday to Interior Secretary Doug Burgum. It also asks Interior to ensure compliance with the 1922 Colorado River Compact. ... "Read more from the Arizona Daily Star.

#### Trump is said to propose opening California coast to oil drilling

Oil rig off the Santa Barbara coast. Photo by dirtsailor 2003 "The Trump administration plans to allow new oil and gas drilling off the California coast for the first time in roughly four decades, according to three people briefed on the matter. The move would set up a confrontation with Gov. Gavin Newsom, a Democrat who has fought offshore drilling and who has emerged as one of President Trump's chief political antagonists. The governor is in Brazil for the United Nations climate summit, where he is drawing a contrast between himself and Mr. Trump, who denigrates efforts to fight global warming. The Interior Department could announce the proposal as soon as this week, according to the three people, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly. When asked about the proposal on Tuesday, Mr. Newsom rolled his eyes and said it

would be "dead on arrival in California." He said that the state would "absolutely" challenge the plan in court once it was finalized. ... " Read more from the New York Tim

#### Eastern Sierra Land Trust permanently protects Antelope Lake in Mono County

"Eastern Sierra Land Trust (ESLT) has permanently protected Antelope Lake, a 205-acre property in Adobe Valley, Mono County, safeguarding essential wetland and sagebrush habitats and honoring generations of Northern Paiute cultural connection. This conservation easement ensures the permanent protection of rare alkali meadows, wetlands, and wildlife migration corridors that support mule deer and a wide range of migratory bird species. The property is part of the Adobe Valley Important Bird Area and provides an essential water source for wildlife in an otherwise arid region, making its conservation significance exceptional. In addition to these ecological values, the easement formally guarantees Tribal access in perpetuity for traditional cultural activities and stewardship. A collaborative and adaptive stewardship plan, developed jointly by the landowner, Eastern Sierra Land Trust, and the Utu Utu Gwaitu Paiute Tribe of Benton, will guide long-term management. This plan ensures that conservation actions honor cultural relationships to the land, respond to changing ecological conditions, and support shared stewardship of this ecologically and culturally important place. ... "Read more from the Sierra Wave.

#### Five Native tribes are coming together to protect a California cultural landscape

"Chuckwalla National Monument is more than an epic expanse of towering rocks, hidden canyons, ghost flowers, smoke trees and its namesake lizard. One of America's newest protected public lands is a birthplace, a crossroads, a beloved relative and a historical document to the tribes of the California desert. Stretching across 624,000 acres from the Coachella Valley to the Colorado River at the state's border with Arizona, this landscape possesses a spirit and energy that flow through every object, every living thing and every molecule of air within it, according to tribal members. When an ecosystem is so ingrained in your psyche, so essential to your culture and so central to the stories you tell about your reason for being, you have no choice but to safeguard it. This is the galvanizing sentiment behind the recent creation of an unprecedented commission for California that brings together five tribes to advise the U.S. government on the management of a monument that holds specific meaning to each and is a treasure to all. ... "Read more from the LA Times.

The shutdown may have ended, but the impact it made on families is still very real. While leaders may claim business-as-usual, we know better. We know who felt the ripple effects the most: caregivers, essential workers, moms, and women.

Specifically, Native American women, who have carried the weight of it, and are now helping communities get back on their feet. <u>Today is Native Women's Equal Pay Day and a moment to acknowledge one of the widest pay disparities they face and the long recovery road ahead post-shutdown.</u>

Native women are and have always been on the frontlines of our country's economic struggles. So when events like a government shutdown happen and programs like SNAP and healthcare benefits are cut, it's Native women who feel the impact the most. It may take some Native families years to recoup lost earnings and regain financial stability compared to families that earn more simply because of their racial identity and sex.

#### Here are the facts:

- On average, **Native women earn only 58 cents** for every \$1 paid to white men working parttime, full-time, and part year. [1]
- About 64 percent of Native moms are their family breadwinners and they earn just 41 cents paid to the dollar of a white man. [2]
- Native women with a professional degree stand to **lose nearly \$3 million** to the wage gap over a 40-year career.
- Native women with a bachelor's degree, master's degree, or doctorate degree stand to **lose over** \$1.3 million to the wage gap over a 40-year career. [3]

Overall, Native American women lose almost \$63.5 billion to the wage gap every year. And because Native identity is deeply rooted in culture, community, and ancestry, it's critical to honor its complexity, rather than simplify it into a single category. Meaning, the wage gaps only widen as the data disaggregates into the hundreds of Native tribes.

It's not just Native Women's Equal Pay Day, though; it's also National Native American Heritage Month. A time for us to remember and honor who Native American women were and still are; leaders, providers, and protectors. Women who, despite forced displacement, genocide, sexual violence, abuse, and exclusion from land and labor rights, still manage entire communities and families. Native women cannot be erased, regardless of what history may have sold us. They are here, more resilient than ever, yet still underpaid and undervalued for their labor.

→ This Native Women's Equal Pay and we urge the Republican Congress to stop playing politics with our health care and get to work serving the American people. They need to act immediately to lessen the financial burden of unequal wages that leave Native women and their families struggling to make ends meet.

So today is a call to action. As Native women continue to carry families and communities through the residual effects of the recent government shutdown, food scarcity and health care crisis, it is up to all of us to ensure their work and contributions are recognized and their pay is fair.

Thank you, Diarra, LeAnne, Ruth, Kristin, and the whole <u>MomsRising.org</u> & MamásConPoder Team P.S.— Have you or someone you love faced workplace discrimination or unfair pay? Sharing personal stories with our lawmakers is a powerful tool in the fight against discriminatory wage gaps! <u>Tell us about your experience!</u>

## Here's the Trump executive order that would ban state AI laws

Trump is launching an all-out broadside against states with strict AI regulations. <a href="https://www.theverge.com/ai-artificial-intelligence/824608/trump-executive-order-ai-state-laws?">https://www.theverge.com/ai-artificial-intelligence/824608/trump-executive-order-ai-state-laws?</a> utm source=firefox-newtab-en-us

#### **Presidential Actions**

Nominations Sent to the Senate
National Adoption Month, 2025
Proclamations
November 18, 2025
November 17, 2025
Modifying the Scope of the Reciprocal Tariff with Respect to Certain Agricultural Products
Executive Orders
November 14, 2025

"A library in the middles of a community is a cross between an emergency exit, a life raft, and a festival. They are cathedrals of the mind; hospitals of the soul; theme parks of the imagination."

—Caitlin Moran