

ASSET BUILDING IN NORTH CAROLINA  
NATIVE COMMUNITIES: INNOVATIONS IN  
PARTNERSHIPS, PRACTICE, AND RESEARCH

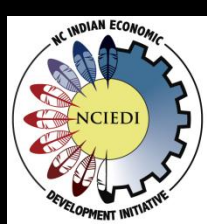
PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY CONFERENCE  
DURHAM, NC  
OCTOBER 17, 2011

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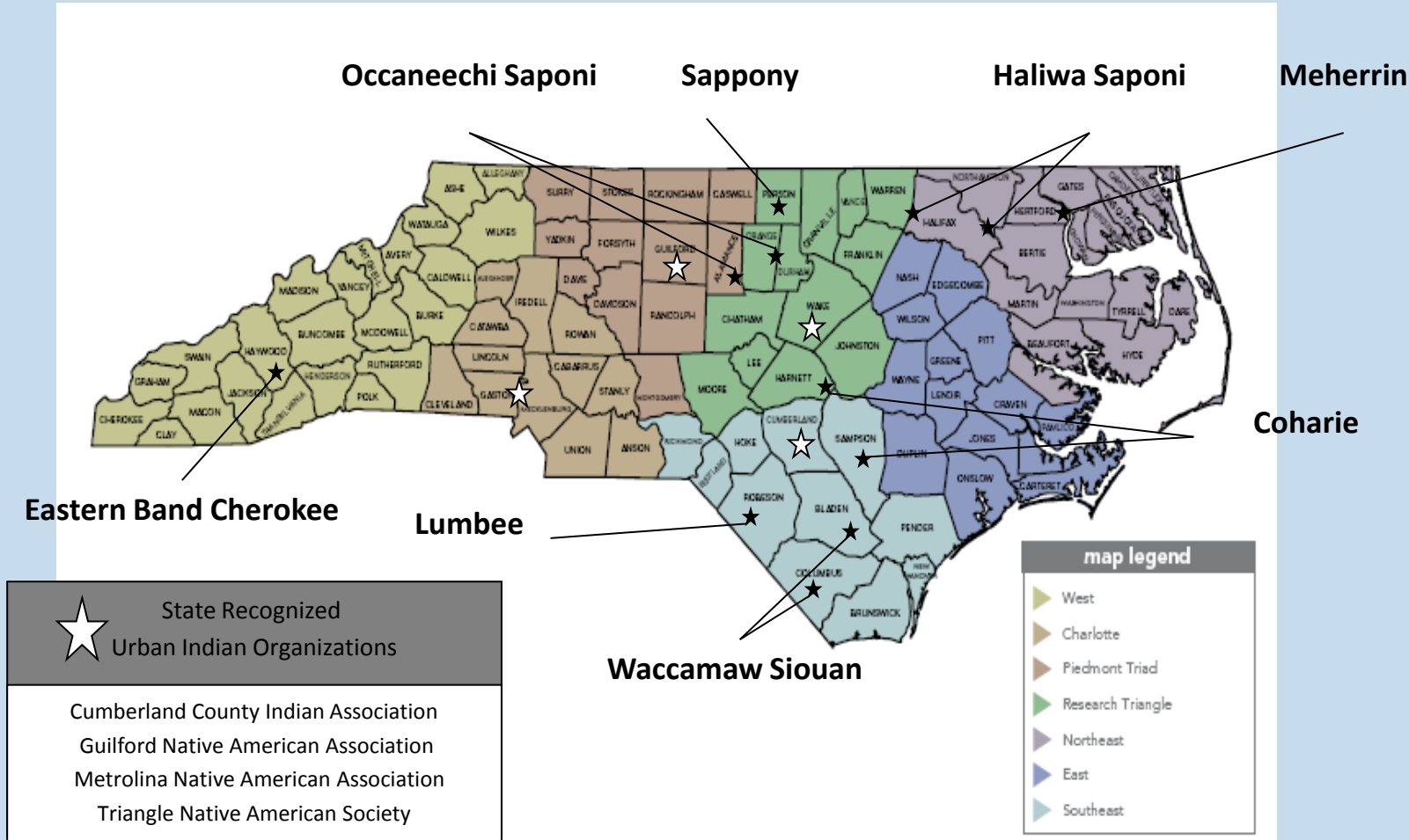
# ***What We Will Cover***

- American Indians and Tribal Communities in North Carolina
- Innovations in Practice
  - Pathways Collaborative
- Innovations in Research
  - Defining and Prioritizing Assets
  - Saving for Post-Secondary Education in NC American Indian Communities
- Innovations in Partnerships
- Questions?

# American Indians and Tribal Communities in North Carolina



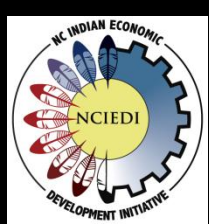
# American Indians and Tribal Communities in North Carolina



State Government

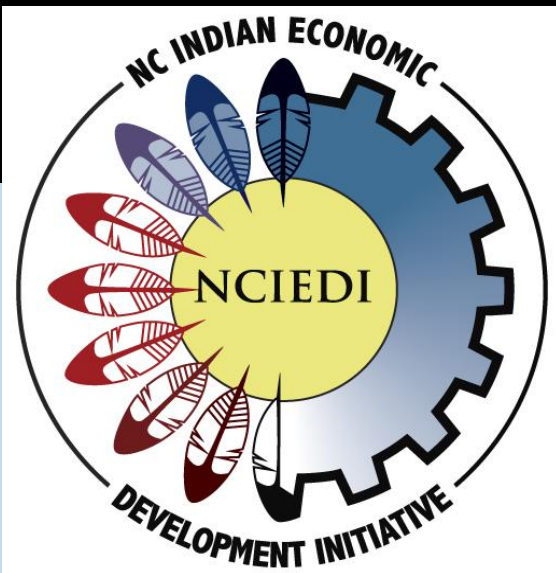
**NC Commission of Indian Affairs**

**NC DOA**

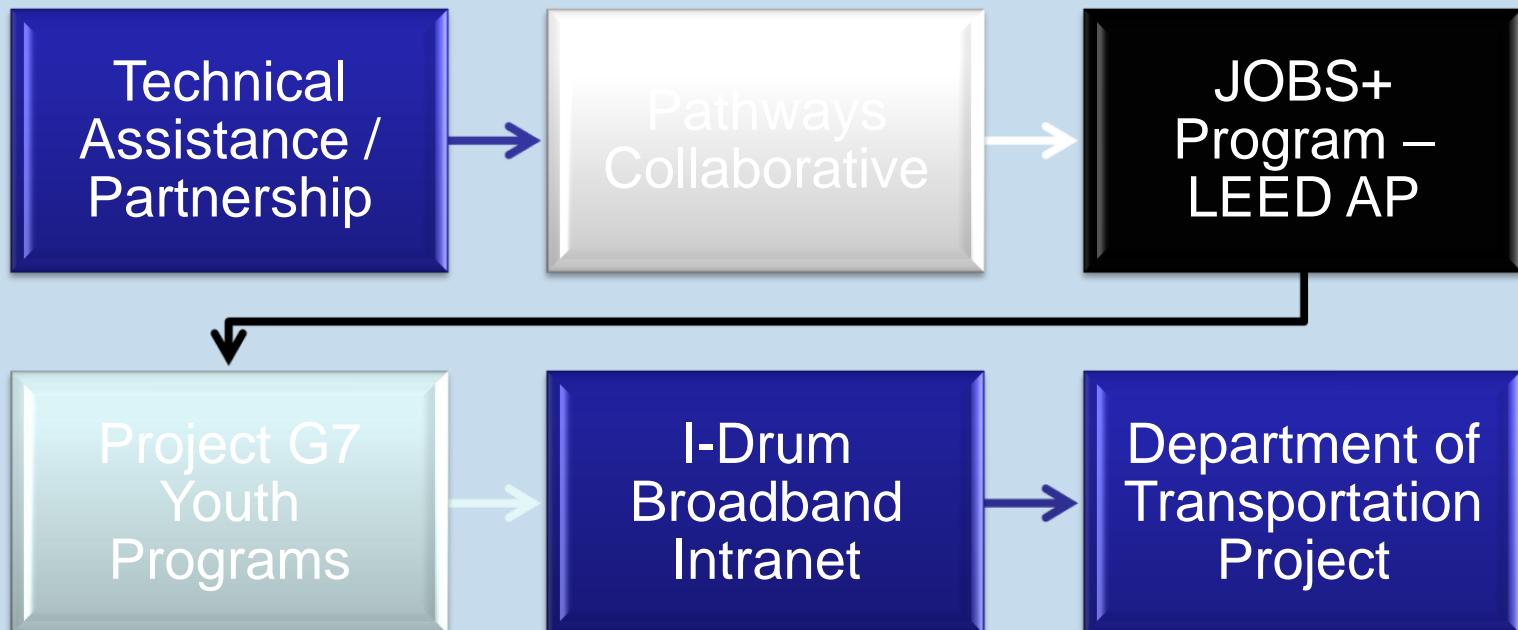


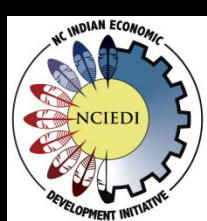
# *American Indians and Tribal Communities in North Carolina*

NC Indian Economic Development Initiative was established in 2001 by the NC Commission of Indian Affairs to support American Indian Businesses and build assets in economically distressed Indian communities hardest hit by the poor economy, decline of tobacco, loss of manufacturing jobs, and competition from migrant labor



# NC Indian Economic Development Initiative





# *American Indians and Tribal Communities in North Carolina*

## 2010 US Census

- **122,110 American Indian/Alaskan Natives in NC**

  - 1.2% Of Total population in NC

  - 53,390 Married Couple Families

  - 29,904 Female Householder with no Husband Present

  - 2,597 Grandparents responsible for Grandchildren >18

- **\$12,775 Per capita income**

  - Unemployed: 16.6% American Indians

  - 19.15% African American

  - 10.7% White

  - 10,121 Household receiving food stamps/SNAP

- **24.2% of total American Indian Population at or below poverty**

  - 25,752 At Poverty Status of Families by presence of Children >18

# Innovations in Practice



# *Pathways Collaborative*

- Overview

- The NC Indian Economic Development Initiative ([www.ncindian.com](http://www.ncindian.com)) is partnering with Good Work ([www.goodwork.org](http://www.goodwork.org)) to develop the Pathways Collaborative to promote community economic development and build leadership and support around asset building, career development, entrepreneurship, and access to related services among North Carolina's American Indian communities. This activity was initially supported by the NC Rural Economic Development Center through an Economic Innovations grant.

# *Pathways Collaborative*

- **Goals**

1. Strengthen relations between Indian communities, Indian and non-Indian businesses, public business and workforce development service providers, and relevant nonprofits within the statewide community economic development network and local communities
2. Strengthen community-based and collaborative leadership
3. Train, mentor, support, and collaborate to achieve proposed outcomes

# *Pathways Collaborative*

- **Project objectives**
  1. develop collaborative teams within 8 tribes
  2. broker service delivery, including economic literacy training, entrepreneurship development assistance, EITC and IDA assistance, targeted tribal and Indian-owned business assistance, career development and workforce development assistance and related strategies, based on their priorities
  3. appropriately institutionalize collaborative leadership, including the establishment of a statewide Native Business Resource Council (an entrepreneur's network)

# *Pathways Collaborative*

- The major activities
  1. strengthen relationships stakeholders in tribal communities
  2. support collaboration through training, planning, and convening regional summits to strengthen collaboration and share good ideas
  3. build capacity through brokering or delivering training, technical assistance, coaching and guidance to community organizations, businesses, the tribes, and other groups (e.g. young people, potential entrepreneurs, etc.)
  4. link Indian community leaders, entrepreneurs, and stakeholders to other resources including each other

# *Pathways Collaborative*

- Proposed Pathways Outcomes
  - Local leadership: A support system of enduring community-based and collaborative leadership focusing on Indian asset building, economic literacy, career development, entrepreneurship, and community economic development
  - Increases in Indian jobs and businesses; new loans, credit, and funding to Indian businesses and tribally-based non-profits; Indian youth involvement; benefits claimed; housing and homeownership; and workforce, career, and entrepreneurship coaching

# *Pathways Collaborative*

- A Sampling of Who's Engaged
  - tribal leadership and staff, American Indian entrepreneurs, key Indian stakeholders and cultural leaders, American Indian Center at UNC-CH, UNC-Pembroke's Regional center and Southeastern Entrepreneurship Alliance, American Indian Women of Proud Nations, Lumbee Revitalization Development Authority CDFI, four urban Indian Associations, Sequoia Fund of Cherokee NC, Cherokee Business Development Center, NCNAYO, NC Rural Center, Conservation Fund's Resourceful Communities program, Self-Help, Mountain BizWorks, MDC, NC Minority Support Center, NC Community Development Initiative, NC SBTDC, NC Community College Small Business Center Network, Oweesta First Nations CDFI (national), the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship (national).

# *Pathways Collaborative*

- **Current and Projected Impact:**
- Establishing a statewide Indian entrepreneurs network, the Native Business Resource Council
- Accelerated the business development of Indian entrepreneurs
- Nurturing SE regional arts guild with significant Native membership
- Reached approximately 500 Indian youth and young adults
- 2 regional summits and business expos (Southeast & Western)
- Active leadership in Southeast Entrepreneurship Alliance, American Indian Women of Proud Nations, and NC Assets Alliance, as well as the following emerging efforts: community-based enterprise development initiative, Forth Sector Cluster Initiative, and community philanthropy community
- Indian Leadership Summit (Nov 2011)
- Planning tribal sustainable forestry asset development strategy (ready Jan 2012)
- Planning for Indian asset development policy agenda (ready Spring 2012)
- Planning for cultural heritage tourism agenda (ready Spring 2012)
- Planning Indian entrepreneurial leadership training program (Winter/Spring 2012)

# *Pathways Collaborative*

- What we are learning so far...



# Innovations in Research

# *Defining and Prioritizing Assets*

- Background
  - American Indian Tribes are asset rich and money poor. <sup>1</sup>
  - We observed there was a disconnect between mainstream asset-building programs and the concept of asset redistribution in tribal communities. <sup>1, 2</sup>
  - Tribal leaders had expressed concern over the potential loss of culture through participation in mainstream asset-building programs. <sup>3</sup>

# *Defining and Prioritizing Assets*

- Aims

1. To identify a Native definition of assets, prioritize assets, and strategize ways to build assets; and
2. To build the capacity of a tribal community college to conduct research.

- Partners

- Tribal college faculty, staff, and students
- Tribal community advisory board
- Kathryn M. Buder Center for American Indian Studies and the Center for Social Development
- Graduate students from the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University
- Private consultants

# ***Defining and Prioritizing Assets***

- **Method**
  - Community Based Participatory Research
  - Training of students and pilot testing of interview guide
  - 32 in-depth in person interviews
- **Sample**
  - Self selected
  - All participants were American Indian and at least 18 years old
- **Analysis**
  - Based on grounded theory
  - Open coding with thematic development
  - Engaged the tribal community and advisory committee to ensure validity

# *Defining and Prioritizing Assets*

- Findings
  - Several thematic categories emerged: Cultural Capital, Social Capital, Human Capital, Financial Capital, Natural Resource Capital, and Political Capital.
  - Responses also referenced the 4 Rs: respect, responsibility, reciprocity, and redistribution. <sup>4</sup>
  - Financial capital, while referenced, was mentioned less frequently than nonfinancial assets such as cultural, social, and human capital.

# *Defining and Prioritizing Assets*

- Findings (continued)

- Financial capital was often referred to as a way to provide for: the basic needs of oneself, family or tribal community; to avoid government assistance; or to support entrepreneurial activities.

- *“...it all depends on how you look at finances. If I look to get rich and everything, I don’t do that. But if I’m comfortable and all my needs are met, that’s what provides all my needs.”*
    - *“Money...Because [I] need money for supplies, art supplies, and stuff like this.”*
    - *“And number three [most important asset] is jobs for tribal members to meet their needs, meet their children’s needs without having to rely on government help such as food stamps or any other type of monetary assistance.”*

# *Defining and Prioritizing Assets*

- Conclusion and Implications
  - Asset-building initiatives that focus solely on building individual financial assets are ill-suited for tribal communities.
  - Asset-building programs should emphasize the overall well-being of tribal communities.
  - American Indians do not shun modernity or want to exclude economic progress and development from community development as long as it does not strip them of their culture.
  - The less tangible capitals should not be overlooked and may be leveraged to help build financial capital in tribal communities.

# ***Saving for Post Secondary Education in NC American Indian Communities***

- **Background**

- A college education is critical to achieving financial stability in the United States. Empirical evidence linking college completion to higher incomes supports this assertion. <sup>5</sup>
- Barriers to higher education include limited family resources, the high cost of post-secondary education, and the scaling back of grant opportunities. <sup>6,7,8</sup>
- Efforts are underway to make 529 plans more attractive and accessible to minority and lower income individuals. <sup>9</sup>
- Little is known about the practices and behaviors of American Indians when it comes to saving for post-secondary education.



# ***Saving for Post Secondary Education in NC American Indian Communities***

- **Aims**

1. To spatially assess NC 529 College Savings Plan (NC 529 Plan or Plan) awareness and ownership among American Indians in North Carolina; and
2. To identify significant indicators of saving for post-secondary education by American Indian participants. Indicators evaluated included: income, child education expectations, homeownership, and credit card debt.

- **Partners**

- North Carolina Indian Economic Development Initiative
- United Tribes of North Carolina
- North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs

# ***Saving for Post Secondary Education in NC American Indian Communities***

- **Method**
  - 18-question survey instrument
  - Administered at the 2010 North Carolina Indian Unity Conference in Raleigh, NC
- **Sample**
  - 107 American Indian adults living in North Carolina
- **Analysis**
  - Spatial data were analyzed using ArcGIS, a geospatial data analysis program.
  - Logistic regression analyses were conducted using SAS 9.2.

# ***Saving for Post Secondary Education in NC American Indian Communities***

- Findings

- Less than half of participants were saving for college.
- Plan awareness in tribal and urban Native communities is low.
- Where awareness existed, NC 529 Plan ownership was 11 percent. Further, 58 percent of those saving in a 529 were state employees.
- The only significant association with saving was college expectations for child education.

## Sample Characteristics

Variable	N(%)
Saving for Post-Secondary Education	44(45)
Aware of NC 529 Plan	42(40)
Saving in NC 529 Plan	12(11)
Education Level	
< Bachelor's Degree	57(53)
≥Bachelor's Degree	50(47)
Income	
≤\$50,000	45(42)
>\$50,000	62(58)
Child Expectations	
< Bachelor's Degree	32(30)
≥Bachelor's Degree	75(70)
Credit Card Debt	
<\$10,000	95(89)
≥\$10,000	12(11)
Homeownership	96(90)

N=107

# ***Saving for Post Secondary Education in NC American Indian Communities***

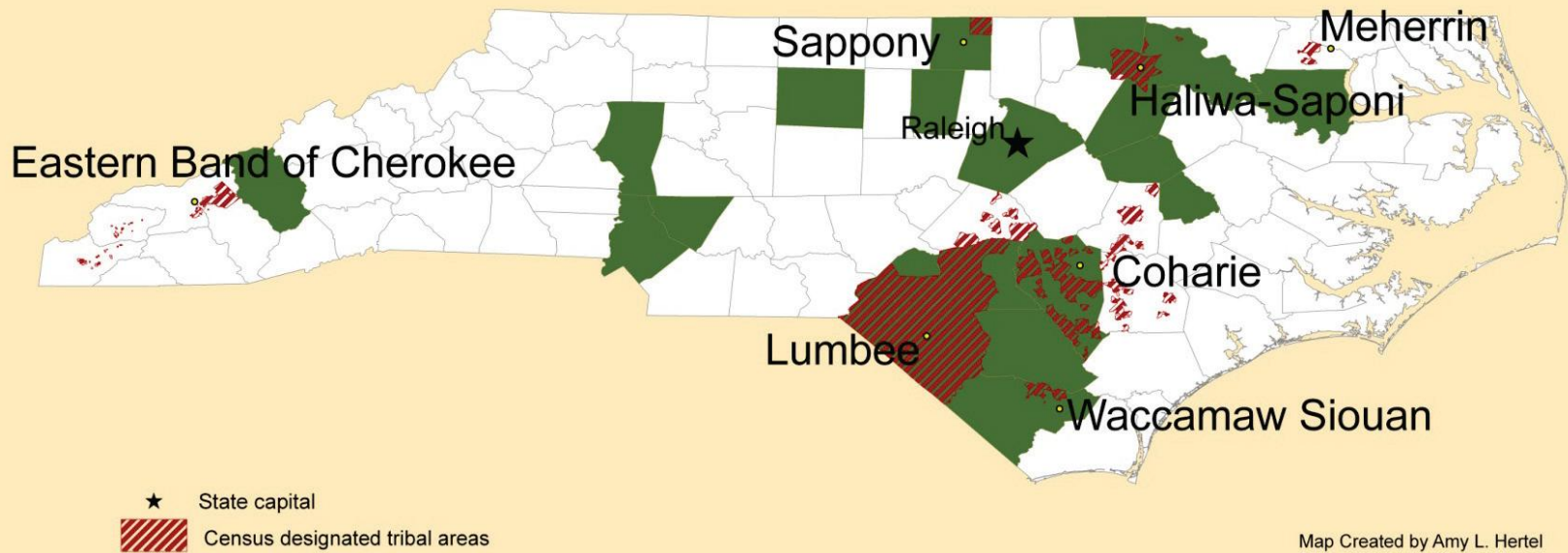
Unstandardized coefficients and odds ratio from logistic regression models of saving for post-secondary education on participant education level, education expectations, income, homeownership, and credit card debt

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>	<b>Model 4</b>	<b>Model 5</b>	<b>Model 6</b>
Participant Education Level						
( < Bachelor's degree)						
≥Bachelor's degree	0.31(1.40)	0.08(1.08)	0.35(1.41)	0.34(1.41)	0.16(1.17)	0.16(1.17)
Income						
(≤\$50,000)		0.77(2.16)				
>\$50,000			0.48(1.62)	0.54(1.71)	0.63(1.88)	0.68(1.98)
Education Expectations						
( < Bachelor's degree)						
≥Bachelor's degree			1.89(6.58)***	1.95(7.05)***	1.79(5.99)***	1.86(6.41)***
Homeownership						
(Renter)						
(Homeowner)				-0.37(0.69)		-0.35(0.71)
Credit Card Debt						
(<\$10,000)						
≥\$10,000					-1.86(0.16)	-1.86(0.16)
X <sup>2</sup>	0.44	3.58	17.25***	17.44**	20.70***	20.86***
Df	1	2	3	4	4	5
Max-rescaled R <sup>2</sup>	0.01	0.17	0.22	0.22	0.25	0.26

Note. Reference categories are in parentheses. +p<.10; \*p<.05; \*\*p<.01; \*\*\*p<.001

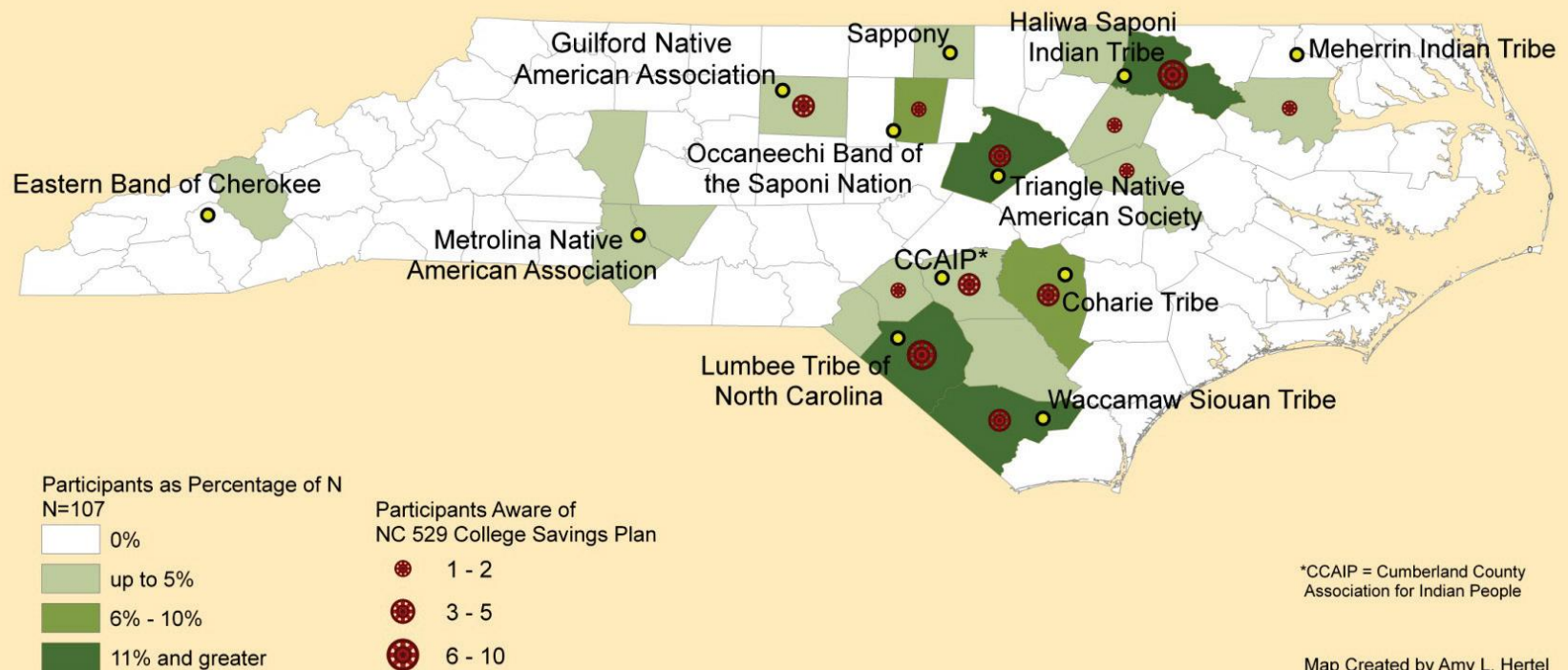
# *Saving for Post Secondary Education in NC American Indian Communities*

**Distribution of Study Participants  
by County and Census Tribally Designated Areas in North Carolina**



# Saving for Post Secondary Education in NC American Indian Communities

## Awareness of NC 529 College Savings Plan among Study Participants by County, Tribal Office, and Urban Indian Centers



# ***Saving for Post Secondary Education in NC American Indian Communities***

- Recommendations and Implications
  - Partner with tribal communities, tribal offices, and urban Indian centers to spread awareness of the Plan
  - Pair Plan materials with financial education programs offered by tribes or Native community based organizations
  - Offer automatic enrollment into the Plan for all state residents
  - Design culturally appropriate dissemination materials for American Indian communities
  - Given the high expectation for education, American Indians are a promising group of potential savers

# Innovations in Partnerships



# ***Partnering with Tribes and American Indian Organizations***

- Identify tribal groups, American Indian organizations, and organizations serving American Indians in your area
- Take the time to build a trusting and respectful relationship
- Be mindful of effective communication among all partners
- Give credit where credit is due

# ***Partnering with Tribes and American Indian Organizations***

- **Practice the 4 Rs**
  - Respect tribal leadership structure and tribal calendars
  - Be responsible to your partners by asking partners to identify objectives
  - Redistribute resources in tribal communities
  - Build in reciprocity by enhancing the capacity of your partners
- **Be visible in tribal communities**
- **Allocate the budget equitably among partners**
- **Maintain enthusiasm for the project**

# References

- <sup>1</sup> Hicks, S., Edwards, K., Dennis, M. K., & Finsel, C. (2005). *Asset-building in tribal communities: Generating native discussion and practical approaches* (CSD Policy Report 05-19). St. Louis, MO: Washington University, Center for Social Development.
- <sup>2</sup> Lewis, J. (2005). *Building tribal economies: Linking asset building strategies* CSD Report 05-23). St. Louis, MO: Washington University, Center for Social Development.
- <sup>3</sup> CDFI Fund. (2001). *American Indian American Lending Study*. Retrieved June 2, 2009 from [http://www.cdfifund.gov/docs/2001\\_nacta\\_lending\\_study.pdf](http://www.cdfifund.gov/docs/2001_nacta_lending_study.pdf).
- <sup>4</sup> Mankiller, W. (2004). *Every day is a good day: Reflections by Contemporary Indigenous Women*. Golden: CO: Fulcrum Publishing.
- <sup>5</sup> Bergman, F. (2006). *Census bureau data underscore value of college degree*. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau.
- <sup>6</sup> Elliott, W. (2007a). *Examining minority and poor youth's college aspirations and expectations: The potential role of college savings*. St. Louis, MO: Washington University, Center for Social Development.
- <sup>7</sup> Haskings, R., Holzer, H., & Lerman, R. (2009). *Promoting economic mobility by increasing postsecondary education*. Retrieved May 1, 2010, from [http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Economic\\_Mobility/PEW\\_EM\\_Haskins%207.pdf](http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Economic_Mobility/PEW_EM_Haskins%207.pdf)
- <sup>8</sup> Orozco, V., & Cauthen, N. (2009). *Work less, study more, & succeed: How financial supports can improve postsecondary success*. Demos, New York City.
- <sup>9</sup> Clancy, M., Cramer, R., & Parrish, L. (2005). *New America Foundation Issue Brief #7: Section 529 savings plans, access to post-secondary education and universal asset building*. St. Louis, MO: Washington University, Center for Social Development.

# *Partners and Contributors in Research*

- North Carolina Indian Economic Development Initiative
- North Carolina Commission on Indian Affairs
- United Tribes of North Carolina
- Good Work
- North Carolina State Advisory Council on Indian Education
- Kathryn M. Buder Center for American Indian Studies
- Center for Social Development
- INSIGHT Center for Community Development
- F.B. Heron Foundation
- Dr. Molly Tovar and Dr. Michael Sherraden
- Dr. Kristen Wagner, John Phillips, Karen Edwards, Jessica Hale and Mary Elizabeth Jäger