

**ADVANCING NATIVE HOUSING JUSTICE:  
FROM CRISIS TO STABILITY, SAFETY, AND SOVEREIGNTY IN TRIBAL, RURAL,  
AND URBAN COMMUNITIES**

PRESENTED BY THE SOUTHWEST INDIGENOUS HOUSING JUSTICE COLLABORATIVE





# ABOUT THE SWIHJC

The Southwest Indigenous Housing Justice Collaborative (SWIHJC) was formed in October 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic amplified gaps in services for survivors of violence. It also exposed a lack of coordination between healthcare, social service, and housing systems, and a deeper disconnect between tribal and non-tribal systems.

In response, the SWIHJC came together to advocate for more shelters and safe housing options in indigenous communities. The SWIHJC built a network that facilitates connection between providers across systems and jurisdictions, thereby enhancing access to resources for improved services delivery.

The SWIHJC has broad community participation among Tribally Designated Housing Entities, grassroots community members, tribal leadership, DV shelter staff, non-profit organizations, clinic staff, cultural wellness programs, unsheltered services program staff, attorneys, universities, and more. **All efforts are voluntary.**



UNITED  
NATIONS  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS:  
  
RIGHT TO  
ADEQUATE  
HOUSING

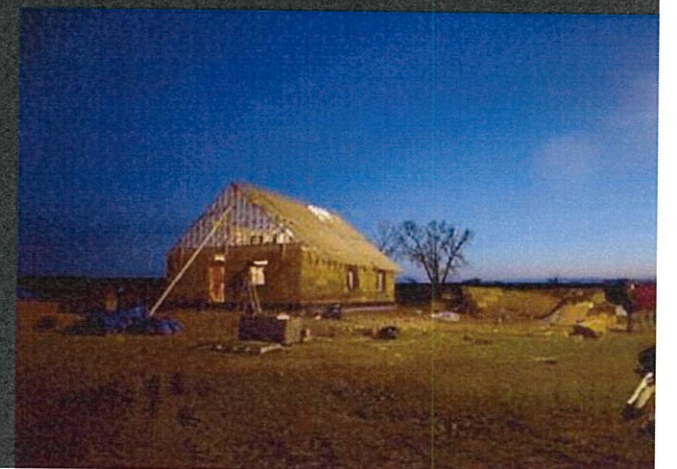
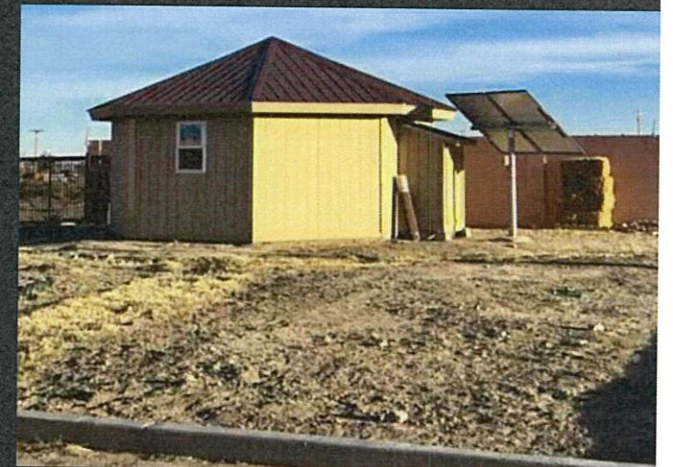
### Elements to Adequate Housing

- **Security of Tenure:** Legal protection against forced evictions, harassment, and other threats
- **Availability of Services:** Access to materials, facilities, and infrastructure.
- **Affordability:** Costs do not threaten or compromise other human rights.
- **Habitability:** Safety, adequate space, protections against weather and threats to health.
- **Accessibility:** Meet the needs of disadvantage and marginalized groups.
- **Location:** Access to employment, healthcare, education, social facilities, and area is not polluted or dangerous.
- **Cultural Adequacy:** Respect of cultural expression and identity.



# SWIHJC FRAMEWORK

- Housing as a Human Right
  - Support stability first and housing first models
  - Honor each person's lived experiences –  
“We all deserve compassion”
  - Rooted in culture
- Acknowledge that safe, affordable, and culturally connected housing is a foundation for thriving families, communities, and economies.*





A vertical graphic on the left side of the page. It features a dark grey background with a thin vertical line. At the top, there is a horizontal band with a gradient from yellow to orange to red. At the bottom, there are abstract, overlapping shapes in red and dark grey.

# SWIHJC FUNCTIONS

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**Safe Space:** Creating an environment where everyone feels respected, trusted, and secure to share ideas, engage authentically, and collaborate creatively.

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**Advocacy:** Elevating Native community voices by bringing their experiences, needs, and solutions into housing discussions at the tribal, municipal, state, and federal levels.

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**Education & Awareness:** Hosting events and workshops on housing justice and culturally responsive approaches to housing.

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**Technical support:** Assisting communities in accessing funding and developing housing solutions.

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**Partnership & Network Building:** Connecting tribal nations, governments, institutions, nonprofits, and allies to share resources, strategies, best practices, and be a source of support, inspiration, and motivation to one another.



# ALLY WORK, CONSULTATION AND TRAINING

- Presentation on housing resources to the Navajo Nation Council, Missing Murdered Dine Relatives Task Force
- Letter of support for Native American Community Academy – HUD Youth System to End Homelessness in New Mexico (YSHI) grant
- Albuquerque Police Department Training & Advocacy for violence against Native people – metropolitan public safety – Chiefs of Police – cross commissions – IPPC and APD campus
- New Mexico Indian Affairs Department
- United Way
- Foundation training on how to work with Indigenous communities on safe housing
- Strategic approaches, cultural relevancy, Indigenous support in all systems



# SWIHJC STRATEGIC PLANNING







# HOMEOWNER WORKSHOP 2025

- Cultural relevant approaches
- Trauma informed care for individuals and families
  - Tewa Lending (down payment assistance)
- Guide pathway for financial literacy
- Share the gaps in wealth and resources on traditional homelands, rural, urban communities
- The issues of bank accounts – personal vs family
- Banking institutions – Trauma associated with money – how we spend money, shame with spending



# HOUSING FAIR

- <https://www.cabq.gov/office-of-equity-inclusion/resources-1/housing>
- <https://www.cabq.gov/civilrights/discrimination/housing-discrimination>
- Hosted several housing resource fairs, Indigenous leadership summit, Zuni Pueblo Leadership to Albuquerque community resources in August 2023
- Host monthly meetings via Zoom

## ALBUQUERQUE HOUSING FAIR

One Stop Shop for Your Housing Needs!

**ADMISSION IS FREE**



Saturday, April 15th, 2023  
 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

**IN PERSON** Live at UNM Continuing Education Building  
 1634 University Blvd NE  
<https://goo.gl/maps/zo2em66EUGGbvqHCS>

Register now at :  
<https://mailchi.mp/02d4ffd5b7fa/home-buying-workshop>

**SCAN ME!** >>



April is Fair Housing Month

**GET THE TOOLS AND RESOURCES YOU NEED TO ADDRESS YOUR FINANCIAL, AND HOME-OWNERSHIP NEEDS.**

Event will include:

- Financial Empowerment Workshops
- Achieving Housing Stability Workshops
- Mortgage Readiness and Home-ownership Workshops
- Panel of Experts
- Onsite Case Management
- Resources Fair Vendors and Food
- Language interpretation available

For more information, please visit our webpage at <http://cabq.gov/housing/fair-1/housing>  
 City of Albuquerque Office of Equity and Inclusion at 505-768-3491 or email us at [oei@cabq.gov](mailto:oei@cabq.gov).















# NAVAJO NATION RESOURCE FAIR

November 1, 2023

APS Berna Facio

On site NHA applications





# 2025 NATIONAL TRIBAL HOUSING JUSTICE SUMMIT

- Sponsored by STARS, NIWRC
- June 26-27, 2025
- APS Berna Facio Professional Development Center
- Albuquerque, NM





# NATIVE AMERICAN HOUSING SURVEY

- Participated in reviewing the questions for the survey with MASS Design Architects Group in partnership with CABQ OEI, Dawn Begay, Native American Liaison
- Focused on closing the wealth gap in Native American communities
- Est population of over 5 million tribal members in the U.S.
- 574 Native Nations in traditional homelands and in urban areas
- Sustainable Native Communities Design Lab
- Addressed cultural relevancy with the survey questions



## HCC NATIVE AMERICAN SUBCOMMITTEE

- The Homeless Coordinating Council (HCC) formally invited the SWIHJC to share monthly updates and recommendations as an official Native American subcommittee group.  
(<https://www.cabq.gov/health-housing-homelessness/transparency/meeting-minutes-agendas/homeless-coordinating-council>)



# CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE PARTNERSHIP

The SWIHJC monthly meetings are hosted by the City of Albuquerque's Office of Equity and Inclusion (<https://www.cabq.gov/office-of-equity-inclusion/resources-1/housing>).

We are grateful for CABQ OEI's support, including the hosting of our monthly virtual meetings and the maintenance of a webpage with crucial housing resources. This partnership has played a key role in advancing our mission and improving housing access for Indigenous communities.



# COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Gallup McKinley County NM Legal Aid (Jean Phillips)

Center for Law and Poverty (Melissa Candelaria)

Renia Ehrenfeucht, PhD, MUP, Professor, Community + Regional Planning, Associate Dean for Research, School of Architecture and Planning, The University of New Mexico

Michaele Pride, Assoc AIA, NOMA, Professor of Architecture, University of New Mexico

McKinley County Housing Justice (Eirena Begay)

NM Department of Health (Ophelia Hudson)

UNM Office of Community Health Tribal HEROs (Carla Sakiestewa and Helen Tso)

Jamie Navenma, Director, Pueblo of Laguna Development Enterprise

APS Office of Indian Education

NM Indian Affairs Department



# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC) STTARS Indigenous Safe Housing Center - <https://www.niwrc.org/housing>

First Nations Community HealthSource Clinic (Randy John, Monica Harvey, Veronica Johnson)

City of Albuquerque Office of Equity and Inclusion (Deputy Director Dillon Shije and Tribal Intergovernmental Affairs Liaison, Brandie Ahmie, CABQ Native American Affairs Liaison, Terry Sloan, Intergovernmental Tribal Liaison)

Pueblo of Laguna Housing Development & Tribal Enterprise (Jamie Navenma)- <https://www.lagunahousing.org/>

NAEVA - Native American Education and Voters Alliance (Bernadette Hardy)

NM Coalition to End Homelessness (Monet Silva & Tony Watkins)

Pueblo of Zuni Tribal Council

NM Eviction Prevention & Diversion (Winter Torres), LLC

Rickert Property Group & Associates (Karla and Mark Rickert)

ADABI - Ama doo Alchini Bighaandi (Lorena Halwood)- DV Shelter in Chinle, AZ

TSH Shelter (Carmelia Blackwater) - Kayenta, AZ (DV shelter)

Northern TREE House Shelter, Trudy Tsosie, Shiprock, NM

Americans for Indian Opportunity (AIO)

Navajo Housing Authority (Kim Bahe)

Navajo Nation Council Delegate Amber Crotty

Terry Sloan, CABQ Intergovernmental Tribal Liaison, SWIHJC

Dawn Begay, SWIHJC and Cicuye Consulting





# HOUSING LANDSCAPE

- **Coordination Gaps:** No state position exists to help tribal, city, county, state, and federal governments align and maximize housing resources for Native communities.
- **Housing Shortage:** Native families face some of the nation's highest rates of overcrowding and substandard housing.
- **Workforce Gap:** Tribes and housing authorities struggle to find skilled workers to build, maintain, and repair homes.
- **Safety Gaps:** Domestic violence and family violence are the leading causes of homelessness among Native women and children. Many tribal housing authorities lack the technical support to implement **VAWA-compliant, survivor-centered policies**.
- **Educational Impact:** The **Yazzie/Martinez v. State of New Mexico** decision found that the state is failing Native students; housing instability directly undermines student success.
- **Racial Wealth Gap:** Native families face systemic barriers to homeownership, limiting wealth accumulation and perpetuating intergenerational inequities.
- **Access to Land:** Tribes often lack priority access to public land that could be developed for housing, further limiting housing solutions.





## Establish a Native American Housing Director within NM Department of Work Solutions – Housing Division

Create a **Native American Housing Director** position with a mandate to:

**Identify and align funding, capital, land, and resources** at the city, county, state, federal, and tribal levels to support Native American housing development in rural and urban areas. (Chief Seattle Club currently does this. They receive funding and resources from multiple government entities to provide several housing solutions from shelter, transitional housing, tiny homes, and apartments.)

**Leverage multiple funding streams** (HUD, Indian Housing Block Grants, LIHTC, state appropriations) for maximum impact.

**Facilitate intergovernmental collaboration** among state agencies, tribal housing authorities, municipalities, and counties.

**Provide technical navigation** to overcome complex funding rules and application barriers.

**Ensure Native inclusion** in all statewide housing strategies through consultation with tribal leaders and urban Indian organizations.





# FUND HOUSING APPRENTICESHIP & CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Support tribally led and Native led **housing apprenticeship and certification programs** to develop a skilled workforce:

**Southwest Tribal Housing Alliance (SWTHA)** is working with **Santa Fe Community College** to develop a curriculum specifically for trades certification for tribal members in HVAC, plumbing, electrical.

**Pueblo of San Felipe** and **Pueblo of Laguna** – community-based apprenticeships with proven workforce outcomes.

Funding would cover:

- Training materials, equipment, and instructor costs.
- Program administration and student support.
- Expansion capacity to certify more tribal members and meet housing workforce demand.
- Travel, lodging, and M&IE expenses

Work with tribal colleges and universities to expand apprenticeship training and certifications in the trades.

Work with Native Professional Advancement Center and other WIOA programs.

Look into pathway programs





# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE VIA NM INDIAN AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT (IAD)

- Fund IAD to provide specialized Technical Assistance to Tribal Housing Authorities or Tribally Designated Housing Entities:
- Develop safe, survivor-centered housing policies, including VAWA integration.
- Strengthen protections for Native women and children, who face homelessness due to domestic and family violence.
- Build policy capacity to improve long-term housing safety and stability.
- The STTARS Indigenous Safe Housing Center provides this training and technical assistance. Can be considered as contractor for this work.
- Integrate trainings and TA information into IAD website to be easily accessible for tribal use.



# STTARS INDIGENOUS SAFE HOUSING CENTER

<https://www.niwrc.org/housing/contact>

Contact: Gwendolyn Packard, Sr. Housing Specialist, STTARS  
Housing Training and Technical Assistance

The STTARS Indigenous Safe Housing Center offers culturally rooted technical assistance and training, policy development, and Indigenous centered resource materials to support Tribes, Tribal programs, to address the intersection of domestic violence and housing instability and to create meaningful social change within communities.





## FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT & HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAMS

- Address the **racial wealth gap** by enabling homeownership and intergenerational wealth building.
- Fund and support programs that provide **mortgage readiness, financial literacy, and homebuyer assistance** to Native households. Begin in the high school level, after school programs, within community centers, multipurpose centers, senior centers, and libraries.





# STUDENTS BASIC NEEDS

- Addressing housing as Basic Needs for community college, Tribal college and university students who need access to affordable housing options to complete their training, certifications, degrees.
- A recent study from UNM , Dr. Sarita Cargas and research group, stated that the major reason students drop out of college is due to food insecurity and housing insecurity. They are working with UNM, UNM Gallup Branch, Navajo Technical University. Perhaps TDHEs (tribally designated housing authorities) can support with housing for students, teachers (who receive low pay, incentivize housing support for them in Tribal and urban communities)



# FUND TEACHER HOUSING

## Housing



Zillow was a great resource to see what kind of housing is available in these specific areas.

Note: There were other houses available but we only counted the houses that were livable or move-in ready.

Facebook marketplace and Craigslist were other resources people use to locate housing. However, these places have low surveillance and are often places where people get scammed.

Salary.com was a useful website to compare housing availability to the national average in each location.

Housing compared to the national average

**Location A** 🏠 0 🚗 1 ✂ 5

Zillow: no houses for sale or rentals. The closest place is approx. 25 mins away.  
1,127 P.

**-55.1%**

**Location B** 🏠 1 🚗 3 ✂ 8

Zillow: 3 houses for sale 115k to 215k  
Rentals: zero  
Closest location with housing is an hour away  
635 P.

**-23.7%**

**Location C** 🏠 3 🚗 10 ✂ 27

Zillow: 63 houses for sale 300K-1.7M.  
Avg. 500K 2bd  
Rentals: 27 1.5K-5k Avg. 3.5K. 2bd  
6,595 P.

**+6.5%**

**Location D** 🏠 0 🚗 1 ✂ 0

Zillow: 1 house for sale 500,000  
Rentals: 0  
Closest location with housing is 30 mins away  
1,976 P.

**-23.1%**

**Location E** 🏠 3 🚗 3 ✂ 25

Zillow: 26 houses for sale 1k-7.5M  
Rentals: 3 \$700-3K  
There were other options for buying and renting but were not livable  
9,170 P.

**-20.3%**





# TITLE I MCKINNEY VENTO BE FUNDED BY PED AND CYFD

“When people think about homelessness they often picture encampments or people staying in an emergency shelter. Yet, that is only a small fraction of the families experiencing homelessness and housing instability in New Mexico. Over 80 percent of children and youth who meet the federal definition of homelessness under federal educational laws are living in homes that are overcrowded or in desperate need of repair, or they lack access to utilities such as running water or electricity. Inadequate housing qualifies as homeless under federal education laws (called McKinney-Vento) because these living situations have a profound impact on children and their ability to learn and thrive.

Appleseed’s work with communities has revealed several challenges around identifying families who may qualify as homeless under McKinney-Vento and connecting them with the extra supports they need. There is deep stigma around housing instability, uncertainty about what supports are available, and fear that housing instability may result in children being removed from the home. Furthermore, some housing situations such as extended families living together are common and offer benefits such as intergenerational ties, in addition to the challenges of overcrowding. Connecting with families in a way that is sensitive and culturally competent requires an investment of time and resources, which are in short supply in many districts around the state.” NM Appleseed (<https://www.nmappleseed.org/child-and-family-homelessness>)





# LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS ON LAND ACCESS

- Land Back: Request legislation enabling cities, counties, and the state to donate land for affordable housing development for Native Americans in rural and urban areas.
- First Rights of Refusal: Request legislation granting tribes priority rights to acquire public land before it is auctioned or sold, to ensure Native communities can develop housing that meets their needs.



**Safer Housing:** Survivor-centered policies reduce homelessness for Native women and children.

**Stronger Workforce:** More Native workers trained and certified in housing trades.

**Increased Housing Supply:** Tribes and urban/rural communities gain capacity to build and maintain affordable homes.

**Efficient Resource Use:** A Housing Director ensures coordinated funding across all levels of government.

**Educational Equity:** Stable housing supports compliance with Yazzie/Martinez, improving student outcomes.

**Wealth Equity:** Homeownership and financial empowerment reduce the racial wealth gap for Native families.

**Tribal Sovereignty & Access:** Legislation protecting land access ensures tribes can shape housing solutions for their communities.

# BENEFITS & IMPACT



We respectfully ask the committee to:

**Support legislation or budget allocation** for a Native American Housing Director at NMDWS Housing Division.

**Provide dedicated funding** for tribally led housing apprenticeship and certification programs, including SWTHA, tribal programs, and WIOA programs.

**Fund NM Indian Affairs Department** to provide technical assistance on safe housing policies, including VAWA integration.

**Support legislation** for financial empowerment and homeownership programs targeting Native families.

**Support legislation** enabling donation of public land for Native housing development and granting tribes first rights of refusal on public land sales or auctions.

# REQUEST TO THE COMMITTEE