

NATIVE CDFIs:
STEPPING UP TO SERVE
INDIAN COUNTRY THROUGH
THE PANDEMIC AND BEYOND

OUR MISSION

The Native CDFI Network's mission is to be a national voice and advocate that strengthens and promotes Native community development financial institutions (CDFIs), creating access to capital and resources for Native peoples.



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NATIVE CDFIs BY THE NUMBERS

69

Number of certified Native CDFIs serving American Indian, Alaska Native and Hawaiian Native communities in the United States.

86%

Percentage of Native communities that lack a single financial institution within their borders to access affordable financial products and services.

47

Number of Friday expert/networking web calls, NCN virtual workshops and ag finance toolkit webinars hosted by the Native CDFI Network for members during the COVID-19 pandemic.

23

Number of hours invested by each member of the inaugural Native CDFI Network Leadership Institute with Harvard University Professor Marshall Ganz.

\$54.6

Millions of dollars allocated to Native CDFIs in the U.S. Department of the Treasury's CDFI Rapid Response Program.

58

Number of certified Native CDFIs — including Native-owned loan funds, banks and credit unions — to receive Rapid Response funding.

3x

Amount of Rapid Response funding in comparison to the annual set aside for Native CDFIs in Treasury's Native American CDFI Assistance (NACA) Program.

\$8

Amount of private sector investments that are typically created by each \$1 invested in a CDFI, according to Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen.



NCN Executive Director Jackson S. Brossy

July 2021

To our members, partners and friends,

The past 18 months have been an incredibly challenging time for the world, the country, Indian Country and Native community development financial institutions (CDFIs). COVID-19 was a national economic disaster. Native American communities, whether urban or rural, reservation or off-reservation, have been particularly hard hit. I know personally, as my community and my family in the Navajo Nation endured some of the highest infection and mortality rates in the world. It was a dire situation.

Native CDFIs across 27 states were already hard at work before the pandemic struck, providing access to loans, credit counseling, microbusiness coaching, and pathways to homeownership in some of the most impoverished and underserved communities in the country. The added weight of the pandemic — microbusiness closures, job losses, staff working from home and, above all, the deadly virus — put Native CDFIs in their most precarious position since the CDFI Fund was created a quarter century ago.

In spite of all these unprecedented obstacles, Native CDFIs stepped up remarkably. They pivoted quickly to work-from-home models and moved to online platforms to provide technical assistance and training. They helped small business clients access Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funding from other financial institutions and helped individual clients figure out how to budget stimulus payments and tribal grant relief monies. They worked with tribes to help deliver masks and personal protection equipment. In some cases, they helped facilitate distribution of tribal relief funding.

Above all, they stayed open and responded to client needs with loan forbearance, new products and new levels of service. Now, they are poised to serve their communities in greater ways than ever before.

Stepping Up for Native CDFIs

I'm also proud of the work that the Native CDFI Network and its board did to provide for members over the past year. From the earliest days of the pandemic, we put a laser focus on checking in with members and taking their pulse via multiple surveys and ongoing communication.

After hearing their needs, we responded with a series of programs that provided them real-time information as well as opportunities to connect with one another to share best practices and commiserate. In webinars and weekly web calls, we kept them up to date on the federal response



to the pandemic and helped them sort through the mountains of information attached to federal funding, grants, paycheck protection loans and other programs that could help their clients and their communities. We also brought on experts from across the country to offer counsel and insight on a range of important topics — from tribal business relief and philanthropy to housing and mental health.

NCN also worked with Native advocacy groups including the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the Native American Financial Officers Association (NAFOA) to ensure that Indian Country and Native CDFIs were a part of the federal relief funding efforts, including the CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan.

Those efforts contributed to historic amounts of federal funding for Indian Country, and specifically for Native CDFIs. As I write this letter, annual funding from the Department of Treasury's Native American CDFI Assistance Program (NACA) is on track to grow to \$21.5 million, after years of stagnant funding at \$16 million. And Native CDFIs have been allocated \$54.6 million in the first tranche of funding under the Treasury Department's CDFI Rapid Response Program. Millions in additional funding is expected to flow into Native CDFIs in the second round of Treasury relief funding later this year.

These investments in Native CDFIs are welcomed and truly historic, but in some ways they are "like a flash flood after a 20-year drought," as one of our board members puts it. In all likelihood,

this is one-time money that will primarily be used for consumer and small business lending. In sum, they're a good start.

More funding needs to be allocated to build capacity in Indian Country and among Native CDFIs. The pandemic exposed issues that have hindered our members' growth, with staffing and technology at the top of the list. As we move through the pandemic and beyond it, Native CDFIs need capital to invest in the people and technology that will help deliver loans, training and technical assistance more efficiently.

As we move through 2021 and try to put the pandemic behind us, NCN will lean into its role as an advocate at the federal, tribal and state levels of government. We'll continue to seek funding for loans, but also for technical assistance, operations and telling the story of Native CDFIs. What we do and how we do it is unique, but it is also replicable. As they have proven over the years and especially throughout the past year and a half, Native CDFIs are an asset to their communities — and a good investment.

Stepping up with NCN

As we look back over the past 18 months, so much progress has been made by our organization and its members. None of this happened in a vacuum, of course. Much of our work over the past year was made possible by our board of directors, who are as tireless

as they are selfless. We are also grateful for the support of many partners and allies that helped us create programming, access capital for members and advocate for Native CDFIs in statehouses around the country and the halls of Congress. We'd like to express our gratitude to Jack Northrup of New England Market Research for his support through the pandemic, including the 2021 member survey highlighted in the second half of this report.

Special thanks are owed to the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), which provided generous financial support and heartfelt moral support for NCN over the past year. While a new partner to us, CCHD has been a strong partner for individual Native CDFIs across the country for a decade, and in 2019 sponsored an "Anti-Poverty in Indian Country Summit" at Notre Dame University with several Native CDFIs.

On behalf of our members and their customers, investors and partners, NCN would like to thank CCHD and everyone who stood firmly by Native CDFIs during the pandemic. Together, we are continuing to serve the underserved, and together we will emerge with stronger Native CDFI organizations.

Axhéhee' (thank you),



Jackson S. Brossy
Executive Director



MILESTONES



March 18, 2020

NCN initiates first survey of members to assess impact of the pandemic on their continuing operations.

NCN convenes the first Friday Expert & Networking web call to help member CDFIs address the pandemic.

March 20, 2020

April 2020

NCN leaders joined NCAI, NAFOA and others to ensure Congress included Indian Country and Native CDFIs in the Federal pandemic response.

Ag Finance toolkit webinars launched in partnership with the Native American Agriculture Fund.

May 2020

July 2020

NCN Institute webinar workshops kick off for member organizations.

NCN and the Catholic Campaign for Human Development announce a strategic national grant to support Native CDFIs across the country.

July 2020

September 2020

NCN hosts its Annual Policy & Capacity Building Summit virtually for the first time, with members, community leaders and elected officials.

NCN partners with OFN to create an online community forum for Native CDFIs.

September 2020

December 2020

NCN's Policy and Organizational Development committees expand to increase their national outlook and capacity building for Native CDFIs.

NCN and CDFI partners succeeded in securing \$3 billion for the CDFI Fund to deliver grants for loan funds through the 2021 Supplemental Funding Bill.

December 2020

January 2021

NCN Leadership Institute featuring Harvard University Professor Marshall Ganz launched with assistance from NeighborWorks America.

NCN members applaud the distribution of \$55.5 million in supplemental funding to Native CDFIs — a 246% increase over annual appropriations through the Native American CDFI Assistance (NACA) fund.

June 2021



Q&A: Pete Upton

*Executive Director, Native360 Loan Fund Inc.
Board chair, Native CDFI Network*

As Pete Upton thinks back to the early days of the pandemic, he vividly recalls his phone ringing nonstop with calls from other Native CDFI directors as they tried to piece together strategies to navigate their organizations into uncharted waters.

“And maybe a moment of panic,” said Upton, the board chair of the Native CDFI Network.

For NCN, the immediate mission focused on helping members deal with the once-in-a-lifetime crisis and share best practices. Upton credits NCN Executive Director Jackson Brossy for taking the lead in finding members the resources they needed to help their clients survive, and for bringing a sense of calm to a chaotic situation.

“I remember Jackson and I just having a conversation and saying that we really need to take a deep breath and step up and bring the resources to the table for everyone. A lot of times, resources might not necessarily be financial resources,” Upton said. “Everybody was in the forest and they couldn’t see outside the forest. What we really wanted to do was create a path outside of all the chaos.”

Upton discusses what went into that process, as well as some of the major achievements NCN was able to accomplish for its members despite the unprecedented circumstances.

Thinking back to the early days of the pandemic, what were some of the key issues NCN members faced?

The first thing that came up was all the PPP confusion and whether Native CDFIs could participate as lenders in the PPP with the way it was originally set up. The thresholds that were set by the SBA were just too high for any Native CDFI to really participate as a lender. A lot of our clients that Native CDFIs across the nation assist aren’t necessarily banked with the big banks that were providing the PPPs at the time. If their financial institution or maybe small local bank wasn’t participating in the PPP, a lot of your small-time businesses were kind of left out in the cold. It was really just about finding resources. The fear was, ‘How are our clients going to fare going through this?’ There was a lot of fear of the worst-case scenarios.

What were NCN members most concerned about?

The No. 1 thing people were most panicked about was their loan portfolio. Were they going to have massive losses due to businesses closing? How were they going to be able to restructure their loan portfolio to be able to make it through the 12- to 18-month period? Were there any resources out there that could assist their clients?

How did NCN react?

We really took a positive approach to it. Jackson brought in all the different federal programs that could assist not only the small businesses, but also Native CDFIs. Our primary focus was giving the CDFIs the resources to help their small businesses, whether it be through the EIDL (Economic Injury Disaster Loan) program the SBA offered or state programs that were being offered.

NCN really stepped up to the table. There’s so many buckets that Native CDFIs deal in — home loans, small business loans, consumer loans, agriculture loans. Each CDFI may focus on one or two of those products. What NCN did was really focus on all of the buckets instead of just focusing on one. We focused on bringing all the resources to those CDFIs where they could walk through the tough times they were having.

Throughout the crisis, NCN started hosting a series of Friday calls with executive directors. Why were those calls important?

There was so much fear of not knowing what was going to happen and everybody was scrambling. Every week there was a different problem, a different challenge that people were having.



What the Friday calls did is it really created a safe environment for everybody to ask the questions that they might be afraid to ask. Nobody wants to ask the wrong question or ask a stupid question, and what these Friday calls did was it created a safe environment to where it was OK to say you didn’t know about this program, can you tell me more.

Coming out of last year’s annual conference, the organization also launched the NCN Leadership Institute with Harvard Professor Marshall Ganz, with a focus on helping directors understand storytelling and creating movements. What led NCN to do that?

For a number of years now, the CDFI Fund’s allocation for the NACA (Native American CDFI Assistance) Program was stagnant at about \$16 million and it isn’t growing in proportion to the non-Native CDFI program. The Native CDFIs need to do better in telling their story and why the appropriations for the NACA Program need to increase, and that really telling your story can move the needle. You’ve got to be able to inspire your audience — and in this case, that would be congressional leaders — to move the needle to where there are increases that are substantial for Indian Country and creating the awareness that it has been stagnant.

We have to get our executive directors to be able to communicate on a local basis with their congressional leaders and tell their story better, and it has to be an inspirational story where they can see the good that’s happening with the money that we are receiving.

NCN also recently established a policy committee. Why was it important to put this group together with regional representatives?

Native CDFIs are in 27 states and each geographic region has different

challenges. For me to know what’s going on down in New Mexico or Arizona, I’m totally unaware of their political landscape; same thing up in Alaska or Hawaii. It was very important that everybody in the network be able to have a voice on the policy committee of what’s important to them and their constituents that they serve. We cover a large area and every one of our CDFI executive directors have their connections, so we wanted to bring the power of a collective voice to the table.

What’s the goal for the policy committee?

The No. 1 thing is having our voice heard in the halls of Congress, and I think it’s been heard well over the last 12 to 18 months. All of a sudden, NCN is on the map and people are listening to us and they’re hearing us.

Tying that back into the NCN Leadership Institute and the Friday calls, how does having a familiarity with the priorities of other Native CDFIs potentially help create a movement?

They may have a platform with another call that they’re on where they may know that something’s important to Pete Upton and they bring it up. Same thing with me when I’m on different calls or if I’m meeting with different leaders: I now know what’s important to people. I was on a call with the Secretary of Treasury Janet Yellen in December and I brought to the table the fact that New Market Tax Credits have been so disproportionately distributed and not to Indian Country. With New Market Tax Credits, the Native360 Loan Fund might not tap into that, but we have so many Native CDFIs in Hawaii, Alaska, Arizona that will. It really solidified what’s important to our members. ♦

STEPPING UP TO SERVE NATIVE CDFIs

From the earliest days of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Native CDFI Network stepped up to serve its members across Indian Country. What started as frantic phone calls and worrisome text messages quickly transformed into an ongoing series of responsive programs that kept members informed, connected and uplifted. A few of the programs are highlighted here.

The Friday Calls

Just a week after meeting with members, investors and tribal leaders at the annual Reservation Economic Summit (RES) in Las Vegas, NCN Executive Director Jackson Brossy was back home in Washington, D.C. and his phone was buzzing.

It was early March 2020, and NCN members from around the country were calling and texting, almost nonstop. The COVID-19 virus was starting to spread rapidly throughout the country, and so was fear about what it meant for the tribal economy and Native CDFIs.

“Folks were scared,” Brossy said. “The people and microbusinesses that Native CDFIs lend to often don’t have a lot of free cash flow. So there was a lot of fear early on that there was a real concentration of risk and that Native CDFIs would be right on the front edge of whatever happened around credit and refinancing.

“Folks were worried about adjusting loan loss reserves. And we had some real concerns that some Native CDFIs might not make it.”

NCN moved quickly to set up a place where it could provide its members with concrete information and give them a spot to gather.

On March 20, NCN set up a web call hosted by Brossy to provide a legislative update. Brossy shared a live Powerpoint and members asked questions about what Congress was discussing and how they could make sure Native CDFI voices were heard. The call also gave Brossy and other NCN board members an opportunity to understand what members were feeling and experiencing.

The initial web call quickly morphed into a series of Zoom calls each Friday afternoon, featuring a speaker who could shed light on the course of the pandemic and the federal government’s response. The “Friday calls” drew dozens of NCN members craving information and anxious to connect with peers who were going through the same circumstances.

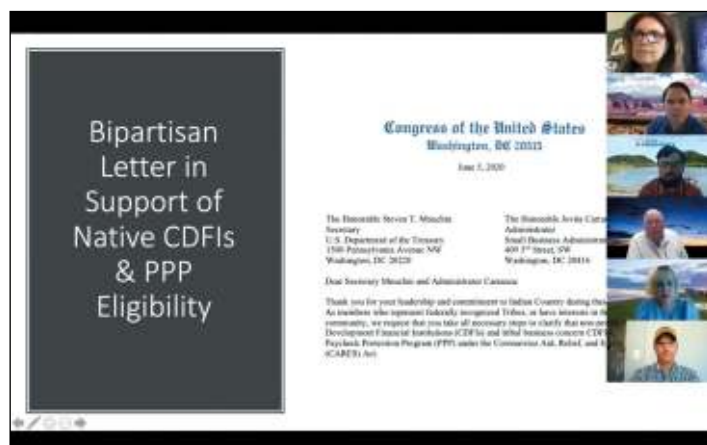
In the beginning, the calls were built around the federal response and what Congress was doing, according to Brossy. Later, the focus of the calls shifted to interpreting the federal response and how tribes and Native CDFIs could get involved with the CARES Act funding.

“NCN recognized the problems, challenges and fears we were facing and got the right people on the calls,”

— Fern V. Orie

CEO of the Wisconsin Native Loan Fund Inc.
and vice chairperson of the NCN board of directors

“NCN recognized the problems, challenges and fears we were facing and got the right people on the calls,” said Fern V. Orie, CEO of the Wisconsin Native Loan Fund Inc. and vice chairperson of the NCN board of directors.




NCN Friday Expert & Networking Web Calls

In mid March 2020, the Native CDFI Network launched a series of web calls for its members. Each Friday at 1 p.m. ET, dozens of Native CDFI executives joined the call to learn and connect with their peers. Over the course of 41 weeks, NCN hosted dozens of speakers, including policymakers and experts from the following organizations:

U.S. Rep. Sharice Davids (D-Kansas)
 U.S. Rep. Tom Cole (R-Oklahoma)
 Administration for Native Americans
 Community Reinvestment Fund
 Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis/
 Center for Indian Country Development
 Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative
 Intertribal Agriculture Council
 Lakota Funds
 Law Firm of Akin Gump
 Office of the Comptroller of
 the Currency
 Opportunity Finance Network
 National Congress of American Indians
 National Center for American Indian
 Enterprise Development
 Native American Finance Officers
 Association
 Native American Contractors Association
 Native American Agriculture Fund
 Native Americans in Philanthropy
 Native American Natural Foods
 Native Community Capital
 Nixyaawii Financial Services
 Tlingit & Haida Housing Authority
 U.S. Department of the Treasury
 U.S. Department of the Treasury
 CDFI Fund
 U.S. Department of the Interior/Indian
 Energy & Economic Development
 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban
 Development
 U.S. Small Business Administration/
 Office of Native American Affairs
 U.S. Department of Agriculture

PPP Changes & Deadlines

- **Extended expenditure period.** The new period will be 24 weeks or the end of the previously it was 8 weeks.
- **More non-payroll expenses to be forgiven.** Previously, 75% of loan had to be used for payroll costs, now lowered to 60%.
- **Extended time for repayment of loans (if not forgiven).** Changed repayment time to 3 years; previously was 2 years.
- **Additional time to rehire workers.** New deadline to rehire workers is December 2020; previously was June 30.
- **Flexibility if reduced FTEs.** If a borrower's FTE employees decline in the covered period, they can avoid proportional reduction in forgiveness if:
 - They have employees leave and can't replace them with similarly qualified employees.
 - The organization is unable to return to the same level of business activity that existed before 2/15/2020 due to complying with regulatory guidance from federal agencies related to social distancing and other COVID-19-related safety measures.
- **Final Deadline for PPP SBA Approvals.** June 30.
 - Most lenders have earlier internal deadlines.




• Dave Castillo, CEO of Native Community Capital

Member Highlight



The Friday Expert & Networking Calls gave NCN members a chance to access information, share best practices and connect with peers who were going through the same circumstances. Attendance at the regular "Friday Calls" varied between 20 and 100-plus and spurred many offline conversations among Native CDFI executives, staff and guests.

The "Friday calls" also became a platform that connected NCN members — who are unique in their own communities — with peers across the country who share the same work.

"We thought it was important that they didn't feel like they were isolated on an island," Brossy said. "Even though they might be the only CDFI community lender in their state, we still have 69 more across the country and we're all moving together in this crazy time."

In the second stage of the Friday calls, NCN invited federal officials and a variety of different experts to participate. NCN members also took the lead on the calls, sharing information about their organizations and the challenges they were facing.

The calls were "invaluable" because they gave Native CDFIs a place to meet and network in a time that was so uncertain, said NCN board member Cindy Logsdon, CEO of the Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation. "They hit on what we were all feeling and the uncertainty of the moment."

The content of the calls also spurred Native CDFIs to connect with one another offline, Brossy said. After a presentation about how the Yurok CDFI was helping administer grants funded by their tribe's CARES Act monies, multiple CDFIs reached out to them afterward, he said.

"I believe the calls were successful in creating a bit of a community," Brossy said. "And it gave people a safe space to get to know each other and build trust."

That trust led to some "brutally honest conversations," said Christopher Coburn, a board member of NCN and CEO of the Mvskoke Fund. "People would get on the call and say, 'I'm worn out' and 'We're up against a wall.' We used the calls to carry each other's burdens and figure out how we could help each other."

The weekly calls continued for 41 Fridays with the number of participants rising to more than 100 on occasion. In early 2021, NCN moved the calls to biweekly and then took a brief hiatus for the summer. The Friday calls will return on a twice-monthly basis in the fall to address topics in a timely fashion.



Additional NCN Programs Created During the COVID-19 Pandemic

NCN Institute Webinar Workshops: The webinar series brought in experts to lead free member sessions on best practices to help Native CDFI leaders fine-tune their organizations so they could perform at a high level. The topics covered during the webinar sessions were primarily technical topics including modeling cash flow, closing the books at year-end and designing effective customer surveys. Each topic was delivered to a small group of 10-15 people in a pair of two-hour webinar sessions, and attendees were given the opportunity to follow up directly with the instructors.

Ag Finance Toolkit Webinar Series: Created in partnership with the Native American Agriculture Fund and the University of Minnesota's Farm Financial Management group, the free Ag Finance Toolkit series featured two different training tracks. The first was designed for Native agricultural producers such as ranchers and farmers, and drew upwards of 180 participants. The six-part series highlighted strategies and tools to help them structure their operations, optimize on taxes, and create strategic plans that would help them access financing from CDFIs or banks. The second series, which encompassed four sessions, targeted Native CDFIs and drew about 100 participants who learned how to value different ag products and how to lend to different ag producers. NCN hopes to build on the series in 2021 and beyond, including a potential "matchmaking" process that will bring together ag producers and Native CDFIs who participate in the training.

NCN Leadership Institute: After its annual meeting, NCN reached out to members to check their interest in leadership training. After getting a positive response from several members, NCN reached out to its ally NeighborWorks America, which has its own leadership program, including one involving Harvard Professor Marshall Ganz. An expert in labor organizing and leadership to create meaningful change, Ganz seemed a natural fit for helping Native CDFIs given their mission. NCN gathered a group of 15 members from around the country and launched a cohort focused on how Native CDFIs can create meaningful change by learning to tell their stories. The training happened in a condensed timeline of 23 hours over the course of a month, including Friday and Saturday sessions.

Annual Policy & Capacity Building Summit: During the pandemic, the annual summit moved to a virtual format for the first time. Keynote speakers included Harvard's Marshall Ganz and then-Congresswoman Deb Haaland, as well as executives from the U.S. Department of the Treasury's CDFI Fund. The three-day event also included a number of issue-specific working groups and breakout sessions built around the unique needs of Native CDFIs across the country. The summit also provided opportunities for Native CDFI executives to connect and speak frankly with one another.

OFN Partnership/Online Community: NCN forged a technology partnership with the Opportunity Finance Network (OFN), a national association of more than 300 community development financial institutions. Under the partnership, NCN created an online community for Native CDFIs using the OFN technology platform. As a result, NCN members now have access to a centralized portal where Native CDFIs can chat and share resources, challenges and specific questions related to doing business in Indian Country.

Board Committee Growth: NCN's two working committees took important steps to increase their national outlook and grow. The Organizational Development Committee, chaired by Mvskoke Fund CDFI CEO Christopher Coburn, came together throughout the past year to offer support and capacity building for both NCN as well as member CDFIs. The Policy Committee expanded to provide more regional representation and ensure a continued national perspective for CDFI policy discussions. Nine elected regional delegates joined the five-person Policy Committee, which is chaired by board member Robin Danner, CEO and co-founder of the Homestead Community Development Corporation. The growth of NCN committees gives everyone a seat at the table from across Indian Country and will foster greater communication about Native CDFI needs. ♦



Catholic Campaign for Human Development a Valuable Partner During the Pandemic

Knowing Indian Country was being disproportionately affected during the COVID-19 pandemic, Native CDFI Network (NCN) recognized it had to play a major role to help ease the pain.

Realizing the effects of the crisis went beyond the health and safety of tribal citizens, NCN leaders sprung into action to deal with the unprecedented economic challenges for tribal business enterprises' survival.

Soon after the outbreak of the pandemic, NCN leaders sought assistance from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), a national anti-poverty program of the U.S. Catholic Bishops. Based in Washington, D.C., CCHD operates on the motto "Helping People Help Themselves."

Native CDFIs also fulfill a similar mission by providing loans, micro-business coaching and homeownership counseling. They are all about Native Americans helping themselves.

During the pandemic, these measures became more significant in scope in Indian Country, driven by the voluntary closure of tribal casinos and resorts, which produced ripple effects that caused tremendous financial hardships. In some cases, these hardships caused Native-owned and -operated business enterprises to stare down permanent closure, while the loss of revenue caused consumers to miss payments on loans.

Soon after the outbreak of the pandemic, an NCN study found that more than half of Native CDFIs had already been contacted about restructuring loans. Four months later, the challenges Native CDFIs faced had grown tremendously. COVID-related economic problems in already poverty-stricken areas forced Native CDFIs to defer loan payments, restructure loans and increase loan loss reserves. Further complicating matters, the vast majority of Native CDFIs were deemed ineligible to assist their clients with federal support efforts such as the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP).

Help from the CCHD came via a \$300,000 strategic national grant, which allowed NCN to provide a safety net during the pandemic for Native CDFIs spanning 27 states.

"We were fortunate to partner with CCHD through these grim times of the pandemic. Native CDFIs across the country are on the frontlines of the economic downturn, and we appreciate our partners who supported these important institutions," said Pete Upton (Ponca Tribe of Nebraska), who chairs the NCN board of directors.

NCN Executive Director Jackson Brossy (Diné) said that over the past few years, CCHD has been a great supporter of several Native CDFIs, spanning from Montana to Nebraska and Oklahoma to South Dakota.

"We are proud of this national partnership with CCHD that has allowed us to connect directly with 24 Native CDFIs across the country to respond to this pandemic that has caused so much harm and destruction in Native families," Brossy said.

For CCHD, the strategic grant was a natural fit for the organization, according to Ralph McCloud, the director of the anti-poverty program.

"We don't go in with any agenda. We try to listen to what needs are," McCloud said. "The needs of the Native communities are not normally heard. They are not in the public discourse. We often hear about the poverty that exists in Native communities, so this seemed like an opportunity to amplify that."

Fortunately, the two organizations already maintained a working relationship prior to the pandemic. In October 2019, six months before the outbreak, Native CDFI Network leaders attended the "Reservation Anti-Poverty Summit" hosted by the CCHD at the University of Notre Dame. The CCHD invited Native American experts to discuss possible ways to eliminate poverty in Indian Country. During the summit, they emphasized four areas: land, sovereignty, education and racism.

From the discussion, two recommendations emerged from the summit relating to Native CDFIs: Work to increase funding for Native CDFIs and develop awareness of Native CDFIs in faith communities.

Six months later, when the need arose for assistance, NCN leaders connected with CCHD.

McCloud says both organizations reached out to each other at the same time to begin discussions on the strategic grant.

"We don't go in with an agenda. We try to listen to what the needs are. (Because) the needs of the Native communities are not normally heard ... so this seemed like an opportunity to amplify that."

— Ralph McCloud

Catholic Campaign for Human Development

"We did an out-of-the-usual grant process to get NCN the strategic grant," McCloud said. "We really liked the sense of community model we found in Native communities."

With the funds from the grant, NCN was able to provide nearly 50 high-quality training sessions. This series of training included a partnership with Harvard professor Marshall Ganz to create the first cohort of NCN Leadership Institute.

"Given the realities of what we have learned and how this grant was administered, I think we want to look at how we can help the Native communities more," McCloud said.

According to McCloud, the grant could continue up to five years.

"We look forward to growing this partnership to fight poverty and increase opportunity for Native people all across this country, whether reservation-based, urban or in between," Brossy added. ❖

WHY NATIVE CDFIs MATTER.



“Not only do Native CDFIs provide the capital needed to expand the private sector in Tribal communities, their financial services allow community members to live and thrive in their homelands. By leveraging community relationships and financial know-how, Native CDFIs serve as conduits to additional credit that is necessary to address structural barriers to modernizing infrastructure and the Tribal economic ecosystem.”

— **Casey Lozar**

Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis/Center for Indian Country Development.

“Native CDFIs are providing crucial financial infrastructure and asset-building opportunities to Native communities that have long lacked access to financial institutions and other traditional sources of credit, capital, and other vital resources needed to build healthy, sustainable economies. Across Indian Country, these organizations are critical partners in advancing economic sovereignty by addressing these challenges directly and helping to create custom, innovative solutions to empower Native communities with real opportunities to build futures marked by self-sufficiency and independence.”

— **President Fawn Sharp**

National Congress of American Indians



“The Department of the Interior is committed to making investments in Tribal communities that strengthen local economies, create jobs, and support families. In many Tribal communities, CDFIs provide important access to capital for housing development and small business startups where people have otherwise struggled to secure long-needed investments.”

— **Bryan Newland**

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior – Indian Affairs

“The pandemic taught us a critical lesson in the power of community financial institutions to reach communities that other lenders neglect. Moving forward, we must examine the SBA programs that empower CDFIs to find ways to improve them. Programs have proven effective in helping CDFIs get capital to underserved communities.”

— **U.S. Rep. Sharice Davids**

(D-KS)



“Native Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) assist native communities build sustainability by increasing their access to credit, capital, and financial literacy which directly contributes to tribal sovereignty. The National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development has also started a CDFI and we have a goal to be administering loans by late fall. It is important we contribute to the continued growth and development in as many ways as possible. We want to aid in the development and continuation of Indian enterprises.”

— **Chris James**

National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development

Thank you

to the following organizations for stepping up to offer generous support of Native Community Development Financial Institutions and the Native CDFI Network throughout the pandemic.



Catholic Campaign for Human Development



Northwest Area Foundation



WELLS
FARGO



U.S. Small Business Administration



National Congress of American Indians

Native American Finance Officers Association

Opportunity Finance Network

Oweesta Corporation

The Native CDFI Network expresses special gratitude to Jack Northrup of **New England Market Research** for his support through the pandemic.

Members of the Na

*Native CDFI Network membership base consists of a wide variety of emerging and
Following is an alphabetical listing of*

**The Affiliated Tribes of the
Northwest Indians Financial Services**

18230 Frost Road
Dallas, OR 97338
516-465-3741
www.atnitribes.org/edc

Alaska Benteh Capital

PO Box 871565
Wasilla, AK 99687
907-373-7960
www.alaskacdfi.org

Alaska Growth Capital

3301 C Street, Ste. 100
Anchorage, AK 99503
907-339-6760
www.alaskagrowth.com

Black Hills Community Loan Fund

1010 9th Street, Ste. 13
Rapid City, SD 57702
605-519-5124
www.bhclf.org

Bristol Bay Development Fund

111 16th Avenue Ste. 400
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-301-0504
<https://www.facebook.com/bristolbaydevelopmentfund>

Chehalis Loan Fund

PO Box 536
Oakville, WA 98568
<https://www.chehalistribe.org/businesses/tribal-loan-fund/>

**Cherokee Nation Economic
Development Trust Authority**

PO Box 948
Tahlequah, OK 76645
www.cherokee.org/sbac

Chi Ishobak, Inc.

415 E. Prairie Ronde St.
Dowagiac, MI 49047
269-783-4157
www.chiishobak.org

**Citizen Potawatomi Community
Development Corporation**

130 E. MacArthur, #206
Shawnee, OK 74804
405-878-4697
www.cpcdc.org

**Council for Native Hawaiian
Advancement**

2149 Lauwiliwili St., Ste. 200
Kapolei, Hawaii 96707
808-596-8155
www.hawaiiancouncil.org

First Peoples Fund

PO Box 2977
Rapid City, SD 57709
605-348-0324
www.firstpeoplesfund.org

Four Bands Community Fund

PO Box 932
Eagle Butte, SD 57625
605- 964-3687
www.fourbands.org

**Four Directions Development
Corporation**

20 Godfrey Drive
Orono, Maine 04473
207-866-6545
www.fourdirectionsmaine.org

Haa Yakaawu Financial Corporation

5446 Jenkins Drive
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 780-6868

Hawaiian Community Assets

200 N. Vineyard Blvd. #A300
Honolulu, HI 96817
808-587-7886
www.hawaiiancommunity.net

Hawaiian Homestead Loan Fund

4523 Ioane Road, Unit E
Anahola, HI 96703
808-431-4067
<https://hawaiianhomesteads.org/homestead-loan-fund/>

Hopi Credit Association

PO Box 1259
Keams Canyon, AZ 96034
928-738-2205
www.hopicredit.org

Indian Land Capital Company

151 East County Road B2
Little Canada, MN 55117
651-444-5759
www.ilcc.net

**Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe Economic
Development Authority**

1033 Old Blyn Highway
Sequim, WA 98382
jamestowntribe.org/portfolio-items/economic-development-authority/

Lakota Funds

PO Box 340
Kyle, SD 57752
605-455-2500
www.lakotafunds.org

Leech Lake Financial Services

113 Spruce Ave NE
Cass Lake, MN 56633
<https://www.lfinancial.org>

Lei Ho'olaha

PO Box 6511
Kamuela, HI 96743
808-226-8089
www.lhcdfi.org

Mazaska Owecaso Otipi Financial

PO Box 1996
Pine Ridge, SD 57770
605-867-1018
www.mazaskacdfi.org

Mni Sota Fund

113 E. Franklin Avenue, Ste. 200
Minneapolis, MN 55404
612-354-2249
mnisotafund.org

Native CDFI Network

and certified Native CDFIs, supporting organizations and businesses, and individuals.
of all Native CDFI Network members.

Montana Native Growth Fund

353 Old Hays Rd.
Hays, MT 59527
(406) 673-3050
<https://nativegrowth.org/>

Mvskoke Loan Fund

2951 N. Wood Drive, Suite 126
PO Box 580
Okmulgee, OK 74447
918-549-2608
www.mvskokeloanfund.org

NACDC-Financial Services

PO Box 3029
Browning, MT 59417
406-338-2992
www.nacdcfinancialservices.com

Native 360 Loan Fund

211 W. 3rd Street
Grand Island, NE 68801
308-850-0303
www.native360.org

Native American Bank, N.A.

201 N Broadway
Denver, CO 80203
www.NativeAmericanBank.com

Native Community Capital

4520 N. Central Ave. #590
Phoenix, AZ 85012
602-648-9761
<https://nativecap.org>

Native Partnership for Housing

1664 S. 2nd Street
Gallup, New Mexico 87301
<https://nativepfh.org/>

Navajo CDFI

P.O. Box 4919
Window Rock, AZ 86515
<https://www.navajocdfi.com/>

Nimiipuu Community Development Fund

99 Agency Road, PO Box 365
Lapwai, ID 83540
208-621-3729
www.nezpercecdfi.org

Nixyaawii Community Financial Services (NCFS)

46440 Kusi Rd. #A-3
Pendleton, OR 97801
(541) 304-2387
<https://www.nixyaawii-cdfi.org>

Northern Shores Loan Fund

1131 W. Conway Road, Suite A
Harbor Springs, MI 49740
231-347-6753
www.northernshoresloanfund.org

Northwest Native Development Fund

PO Box 148
Nespelem, WA 99155
509-634-2626
www.thenndf.org

Oweesta Corporation

2432 Main Street, Suite 2004
Longmont, CO 80501
303-774-8838
www.oweesta.org

People's Partners for Community Development

PO Box 995
Lame Deer, MT 59043
406-477-62158
www.peoplespartners.org

Seneca Nation of Indians EDC

90 Ohi:ya Way
Salamanca, NY 14779
716-945-7148
www.sniedc.org

Sequoyah Fund, Inc.

PO Box 1200
Cherokee, NC 28719
828-359-5003
www.sequoyahfund.org

Southwest Native Assets Coalition

Laguna, NM
<https://swnativeassets.com>

Spruce Root

One Sealaska Plaza, Suite 400
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 586-9251
<https://www.spruceroot.org>

Taala Fund

PO Box 702
Taholah, WA 98587
360-276-0118
www.taalafund.org

Tiwa Lending Services

PO Box 760
Isleta, NM 87022
218-983-4020
www.tiwalending.org

Westwater Financial, Inc.

55A Saint James Drive
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
<https://westwaterfinancial.org>

White Earth Investment Initiative

PO Box 38
Ogema, MN 56569
218-983-4020
www.whiteearthinvestmentinitiative.org

Wind River Development Fund

PO Box 661
Fort Washakie, WY 82514
307-335-7330
www.wrdf.org

Wisconsin Native Loan Fund

PO Box 580
Lac Du Flambeau, WI 54538
715-588-1600
www.winlf.org

Yurok Alliance CDFI

PO Box 1043
Klamath, CA 95548





PANDEMIC IMPACT ON NATIVE CDFIs:

2021 NATIVE CDFI NETWORK MEMBER SURVEY

When the pandemic hit in early 2020, Native Community Development Financial Institutions grappled with many of the same challenges their clients faced. Because most Native CDFI loan funds lend to small businesses and microbusinesses that were the first to shut down, these Native CDFIs were also on the front line of this economic downturn. The typical ways of working and connecting with individual and small business borrowers suddenly ceased, forcing them to find new methods on the fly to serve their communities, many of whom would bear the brunt of the pandemic's economic fallout. As microbusinesses were forced to shut down, these small businesses' ability to repay loans to Native CDFIs was in jeopardy.

Further complicating matters, many Native communities themselves were directly affected by high infection rates and mortality rates that were among the highest in the country or — as in the case of Navajo Nation — the world.

At a time when their jobs became increasingly difficult, Native CDFIs rose to the challenge. With staff being stretched thin and adapting to the new telecommuting business model, Native CDFI team members put in long hours to work with clients left economically vulnerable by business closures, stay-at-home mandates, layoffs, added costs and supply chain pressures — even the virus itself.

Native CDFIs are built on community relationships. So when the community was hurting, staff at Native CDFIs across Indian Country realized they needed to find ways to step up and help. And they did, piloting new programs, connecting clients to various resources and working with them creatively to make their financial commitments less burdensome as they focused on healing — economically, physically and mentally — from what they all hoped is a once-in-a-lifetime event.

Early on, the Native CDFI Network (NCN) found its members were also hurting. They were worn out, isolated and, at times, in tears. NCN responded with a series of programs and initiatives that brought members together to learn, network and support one another. NCN also checked in with its members on a near-daily basis with phone calls, texts, webinars, Friday expert/networking web calls and formal survey research.

Native CDFI Network conducted several surveys throughout the pandemic to identify in real time the challenges, concerns and issues that its members were encountering. The outreach culminated in a comprehensive March 2021 survey by NCN of its members. Some key themes emerged:

CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY

Native CDFIs did what was necessary to help their clients, even if they didn't directly benefit.

- 68 percent helped clients access PPP even though the Native CDFI couldn't participate as the lender
- 86 percent assisted borrowers in accessing other state/local/tribal resources
- 55 percent partnered with a tribal entity to deliver COVID-19 resources, including grants, masks and PPE
- 100 percent of Native CDFIs worked with existing borrowers to ease repayment terms using a variety of strategies

RESILIENCE/FLEXIBILITY OF NATIVE CDFIs

Even in a crisis, Native CDFIs found ways to grow and seize new opportunities by helping their communities.

- 68 percent said they never shut down during the pandemic
- 95 percent moved to platforms like Zoom to provide technical assistance to clients
- 47 percent added new products
- 77 percent added new relationships
- 59 percent reported increased loan volume in terms of dollars

QUALITY OF NATIVE CDFI INVESTMENTS

Native CDFIs rose to the challenges presented by the pandemic, showing investments into member Native CDFIs were sound.

- 73 percent said loan delinquency did not increase
- 82 percent had not charged off/written off more during the pandemic than prior
- 95 percent didn't have to restructure their corporate debt obligations as a result of COVID-19

PRE-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES REMAIN

While Native CDFIs were largely successful in navigating COVID-19, several challenges remain that could hinder their ability to grow.

- 92 percent said they needed more staff capacity
- 58 percent said they needed more loan capital
- 33 percent said they needed more operational capital
- 25 percent identified technology as an issue
- 25 percent identified borrower risk as an issue

The following pages highlight some of the key findings and respondent comments from the survey, which is available in its entirety on the NCN website. ♦

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Native CDFIs have seen an organizational adaption process take place over the last 14 months. Few were prepared for the pandemic, its effects and length. Strategic plans were of little use. To Native CDFI managers, the pandemic exposed severe technology issues and a lack of staffing availability above all issues they have faced.

The Native CDFI Network engaged the services of New England Market Research Inc. to conduct a survey of Native CDFIs that are members of NCN. The survey was available for input from March 3 to March 31, 2021 via SurveyMonkey.com. The survey consisted of 63 questions with the intent of being easily completed in a short amount of time. Senior managers from more than 57 percent of Native CDFIs across the United States completed the survey.

The purpose of this survey was to attempt to look at commonalities experienced by these Native CDFIs in the long battle with the COVID-19 pandemic. Not all of the statements in this section are true for all respondents and not all in the sample answered all of the questions.

Native CDFIs have seen an organizational adaption process take place over the last 14 months. Few were prepared for the pandemic, its effects and length. Strategic plans were of little use. To Native CDFI managers, the pandemic exposed severe technology issues and a lack of staffing availability above all issues they have faced.

The entire United States economy struggled through the pandemic and staffing shortages continue to persist across the nation. Based on the findings of these Native CDFIs, staffing levels were affected in the last 14 months, but not by much. Like most, staff were forced to work remotely, spending more time at home more and less time at the office, and this has caused stress. Most groups lost some staff time, but bounced back quickly. Very few Native CDFIs shut down for any period of time.

The Native CDFIs made new business relationships and forged connections with tribes and tribal resources. The simple truth is the pandemic provided the opportunity for us all to value our relationships more than before.

The survey results view Native Americans as they serve their neighbors through a struggling time. However, most Native CDFIs are able to support so many surrounding communities outside of their own, truly making a difference across the land.

The way technology is used in our daily lives changed immediately at the onset of the pandemic, with almost all members using video calls on a regular basis. If it could all be done again, most managers would want to have an emergency plan — or any plan — to help in the adaptation to the system shock. As no one could expect a pandemic of this magnitude, we can only learn from the struggles to better ourselves and our processes.

While the pandemic was a shock to the system — and a source of high stress for Native CDFI operations, leaders and team members — the financial effects for the Native CDFIs have been less so. Unlike many others, the Native CDFIs restructured little or no corporate debt. As businesses struggled, Native CDFIs have received more inquiries and made more loans than in the past. They have dropped some products and added new ones. Native CDFIs attribute the loan volume increase more to their own growth and outreach than to COVID, although there are many reasons given. Half of Native CDFIs are having trouble keeping up with loan volume, and this is due to staffing capacity and loan capital availability.

Loan delinquency is up but not by much, and charge-offs have not increased in general. One-third of the surveyed group changed loan policies and procedures. Native CDFIs' strategies of choice have been deferred loan payments, as well as continued outreach and technical assistance to borrowers, mostly via virtual channels.

The least difficult issue among a host of challenges is paying debt obligations. Members have had little trouble meeting their corporate obligations. That's interesting because for most for-profit businesses, this would be the primary concern. The ability to meet obligations is somewhat confirmed by the leverage factor below.

There is a lack of equity leverage among the groups. Only three CDFIs out of those surveyed have a debt-to-equity ratio of more than 1. This is a problem of reach, mission and capacity, not capital availability. The intent of the survey was not to be exhaustive with asking for financial data. Leverage is low and there is no group strategy on how to increase non-cash assets.

SURVEY RESULTS RESPONDENTS

Senior executives from these Native CDFIs responded to the survey.

Akiptan, Inc.

Alaska Growth Capital
BIDCO, Inc.

Bristol Bay Development Fund

Chi Ishobak, Inc.

Citizen Potawatomi Community
Development Corporation

First Nations Community Fund

Four Bands Community Fund

Homestead Community
Development Corporation

Indian Land Capital Company

Lakota Funds

Montana Native Growth Fund

Myskoke Fund

NACDC Financial Services, Inc.

Native American
Development Corporation

Native360 Loan Fund, Inc.

Nixáawii Community
Financial Services

Northwest Native Development
Fund

Oweesta Corporation

Tiwa Lending Services

Westwater Financial, Inc.

Wind River Development Fund

Wisconsin Native Loan Fund



BACKGROUND

The survey and results were funded in part by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD).

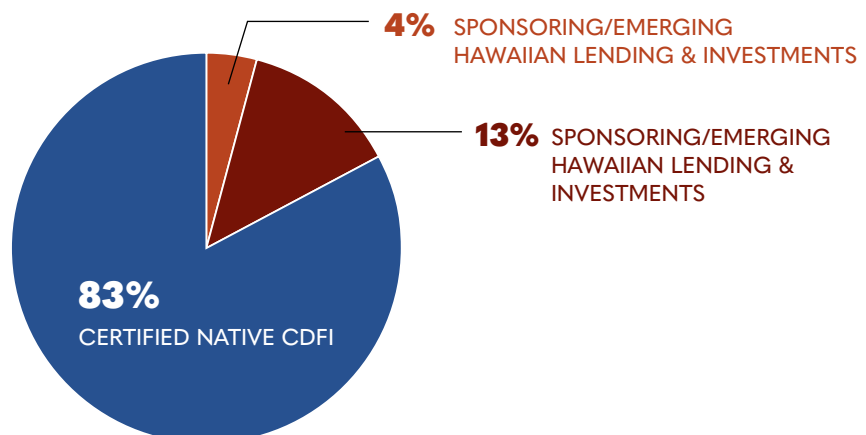
The intent of the survey was to assess how members were dealing with and have dealt with the pandemic. From a mission, community and organization perspective, it's truly important to gain a solid knowledge of the Native CDFI family.

In the early days of the pandemic in March 2020, there was a sense of deep uncertainty as businesses and households were forced to adapt to business closures, all of which was confirmed through extensive conversations the Native CDFI Network had with its members. Many Native CDFIs were uncertain about the effects of the pandemic on their CDFI portfolio (loan repayment) as well as their creditors (corporate debt repayment), their staff and the communities that they serve. This was the backdrop from which we asked questions. One year in, we wanted to know how the member Native CDFIs and the communities they serve were doing.

The survey was completed by senior executives at Native CDFIs that operate in nine regions across the country. The vast majority of these organizations serve customers in both rural and urban regions, as well as on and off reservations. Collectively, they provide a variety of services to their customers including small business loans, mortgages and auto loans, as well as technical assistance and training.

The majority of respondents are Certified Native CDFIs, while a small number of respondents are either emerging Native CDFIs or labeled as other. All respondents are loan funds, with one member identifying itself as "hybrid - private equity - seed to growth."

CDFI STATUS



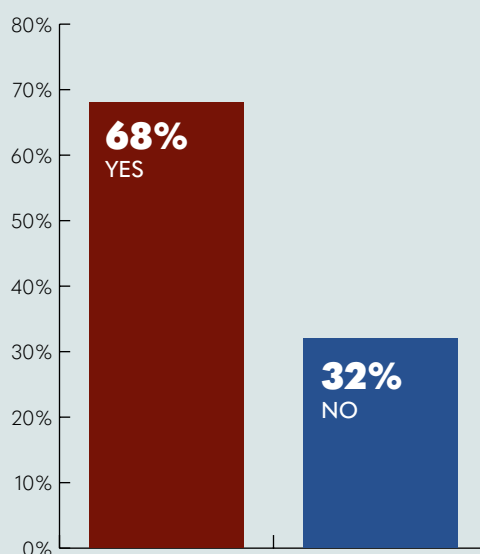
CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY

As the pandemic spread across Indian Country, Native CDFIs stepped up to help their communities and connect clients with capital, technical assistance, information and medical supplies.

ASSIST BORROWERS WITH PPP \$

68%

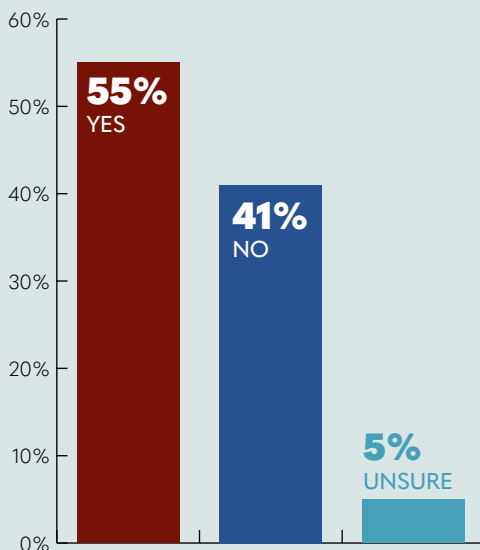
helped clients access PPP even though the CDFI couldn't directly participate as the lender



PARTNER WITH TRIBAL RESOURCES

55%

partnered with a tribal entity to deliver COVID-19 resources, including grants, masks and PPE

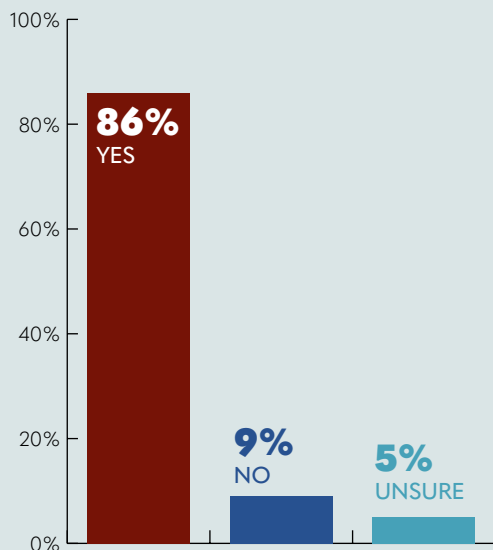




ASSIST BORROWERS WITH OTHER RESOURCES

86%

assisted borrowers in accessing other state/local/tribal resources



RESPONSE TO BORROWERS

100%

of Native CDFIs worked with existing borrowers using a variety of strategies to ease repayment

SURVEY RESULTS RESPONDENTS (check all that apply)	% of CDFIs checking
Eliminated late fees and penalties for delinquencies	32%
Wrote off loans	36%
Had a moratorium on repayment	36%
Re-wrote loans	50%
Deferred payment for six months or less and tacked it on the back of the loan	68%
Other	27%

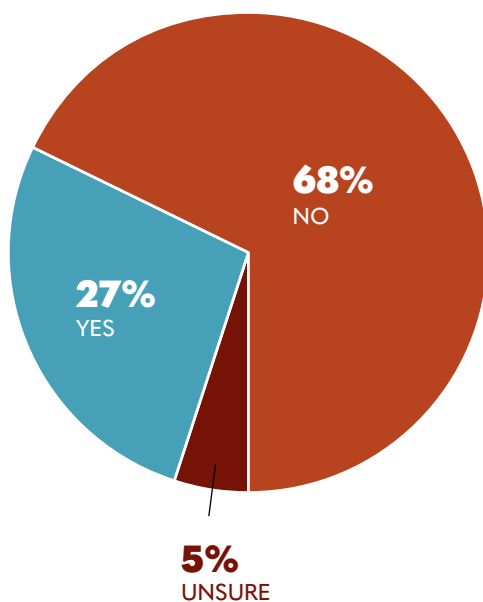
RESILIENCE/ FLEXIBILITY OF NATIVE CDFIs

Even in a crisis, Native CDFIs forged ahead and offered creative solutions that allowed their organizations — and their customers — to survive and grow.

SHUT DOWN DURING PANDEMIC?

68%

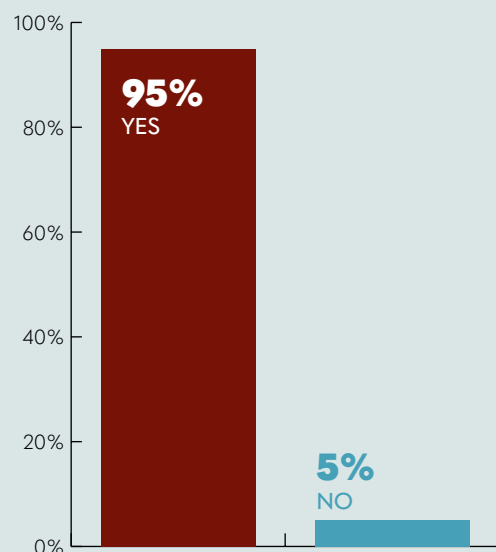
said they never shut down during the pandemic



TYPES OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CHANGED?

95%

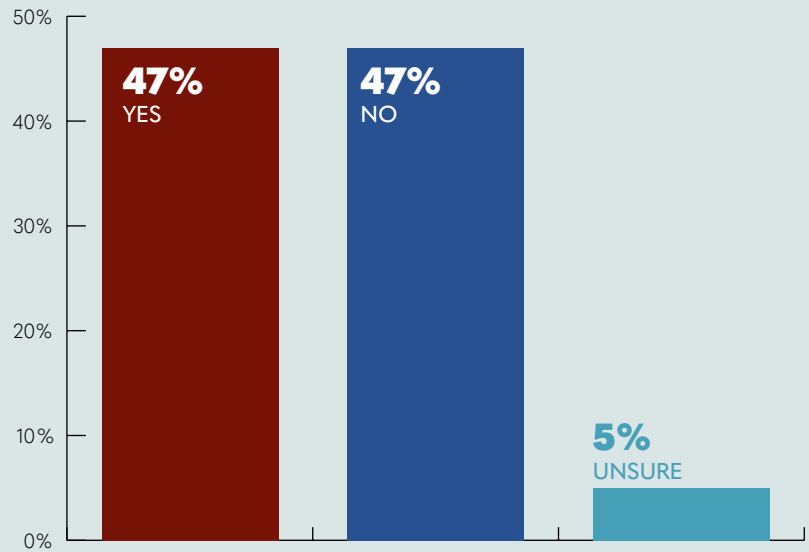
moved to platforms like Zoom to provide technical assistance to clients



INTRODUCED NEW LOAN PRODUCTS

47%

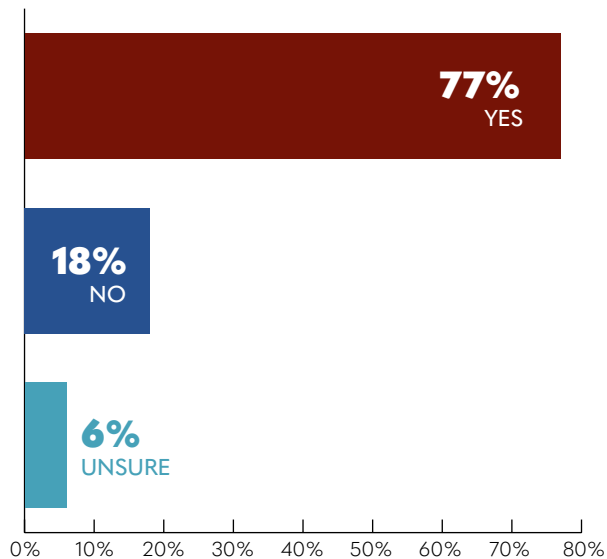
added new products



NEW BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS IN A PANDEMIC

77%

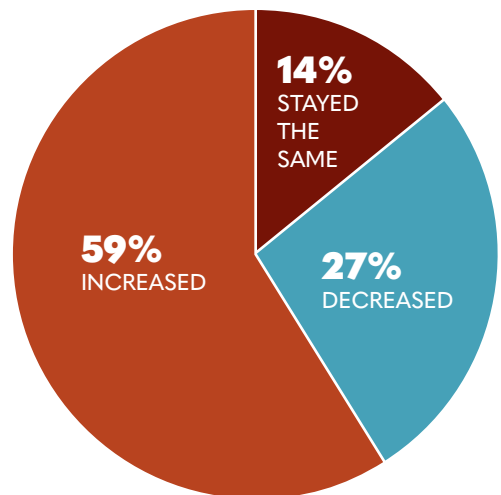
added new relationships



LOAN STRATEGIES EMPLOYED

59%

Reported increased loan volume
in terms of dollars



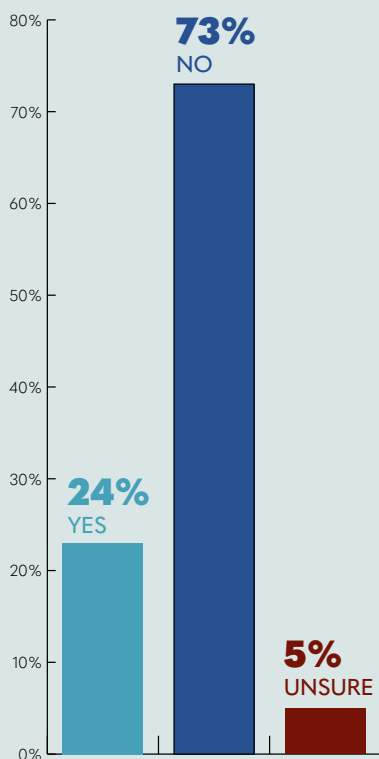
QUALITY OF NATIVE CDFI INVESTMENTS

Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, Native CDFIs avoided the increases in delinquencies and charge offs that were anticipated early on, and only a few had to restructure their organization's corporate debt as a result of COVID-19.

DELINQUENCY

73%

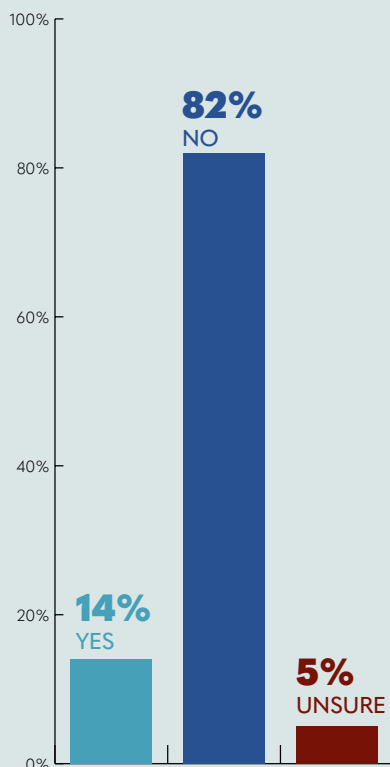
said loan delinquency did not increase



CHARGE OFFS

82%

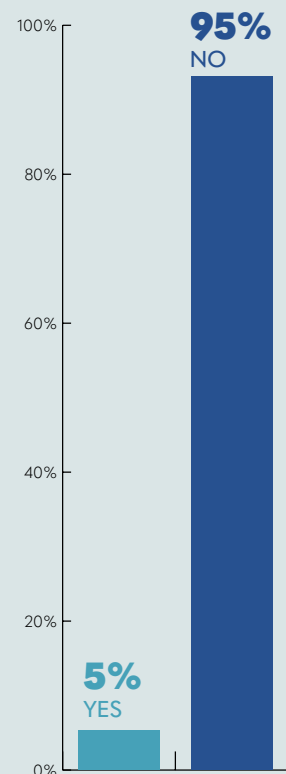
had not charged off/written off more during the pandemic than prior



CORPORATE DEBT

95%

did not have to restructure debt obligations as a result of the effects of COVID-19



PRE-PANDEMIC CHALLENGES REMAIN

While Native CDFIs were largely successful in navigating COVID-19, several challenges remain that could hinder their ability to grow as we move beyond the pandemic.

92%

said they needed more staff capacity

58%

said they needed more loan capital

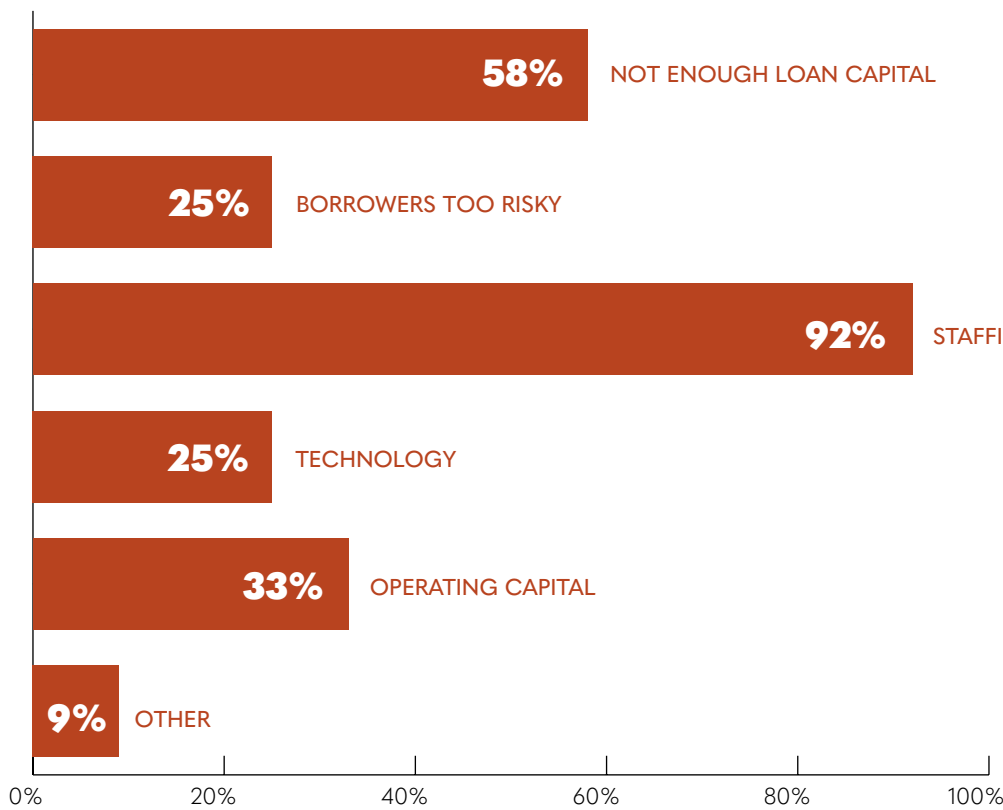
33%

said they needed more operating capital

25%

identified technology and borrower risk profile as issues

CAN'T KEEP UP WITH LOAN VOLUME



“Keep being awesome. The work NCN does to advocate for federal programs that are best structured to serve the Native CDFI field is critical. So proud to be your partner and a member!”

COVID-19 threw curveballs to everyone across the world. The unknown, the uncertainty, the restrictions. Through it all, Native CDFIs showed tenacity and creativity, as well as tireless resilience and resolve to do right by their borrowers, investors and the communities where they operate.

As part of the survey, Native CDFIs were asked: “Looking back to pre-pandemic times and thinking about the impacts that COVID-19 has had on your CDFI, what is the one thing you wish you had known then that you know now?”

The answers cut across a wide range of topics as diverse as the survey participants. Some themes emerged that point toward strategies Native CDFIs will be working to implement in the future. Many respondents said they wished they had known:

- The level of technology challenges they would encounter — from implementing remote work and technical assistance via Zoom to poor internet connectivity and lack of broadband.
- Their strategic plans, no matter how carefully crafted, would not anticipate a Black Swan event like COVID-19 and its far-ranging repercussions.
- While many knew they were understaffed before the pandemic, the level of demand would prove overwhelming for many Native CDFIs, even as relief funding began to flow into their coffers. Staffing remains a difficult challenge for the future.
- Many noted they wished they knew the amount of time it would take to implement new training/technical assistance programs or to access relief funds administered by the federal and state governments, as well as foundations.
- Some participants noted they wished they knew how long the pandemic would last, while one survey respondent shared this sentiment: “(I wished I knew) that this was going to be okay!”

As Native CDFIs move through 2021, the prospects appear to be on the upswing. Native CDFI Network will continue to play an important and growing role in helping members meet the challenges of the post-pandemic era and doing business in Indian Country.

Asked about how Native CDFI Network can best help them meet the challenges they’re facing, survey respondents requested that Native CDFI Network continue building on its efforts of the past year and a half, including:

- Advocating for Native CDFIs at the federal, state and tribal levels
- Helping access capital for loans and operating expenses
- Providing expert information and networking opportunities
- Continuing Friday web calls, webinars and training/learning programs
- Sharing of best practices and innovations by other CDFIs
- Demystifying Native CDFIs by helping people understand their unique value

The respondents’ sentiments can perhaps be best summed up in an open-ended answer from a senior executive at a Native CDFI: “Be a strong voice for the incredible heart and capacity for Native CDFIs to know our community economies best (so we can) directly serve them in culturally empowered ways.”

To review the complete survey results, visit the Native CDFI Network website.

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Homestead Loan Fund

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Mvskoke Loan Fund

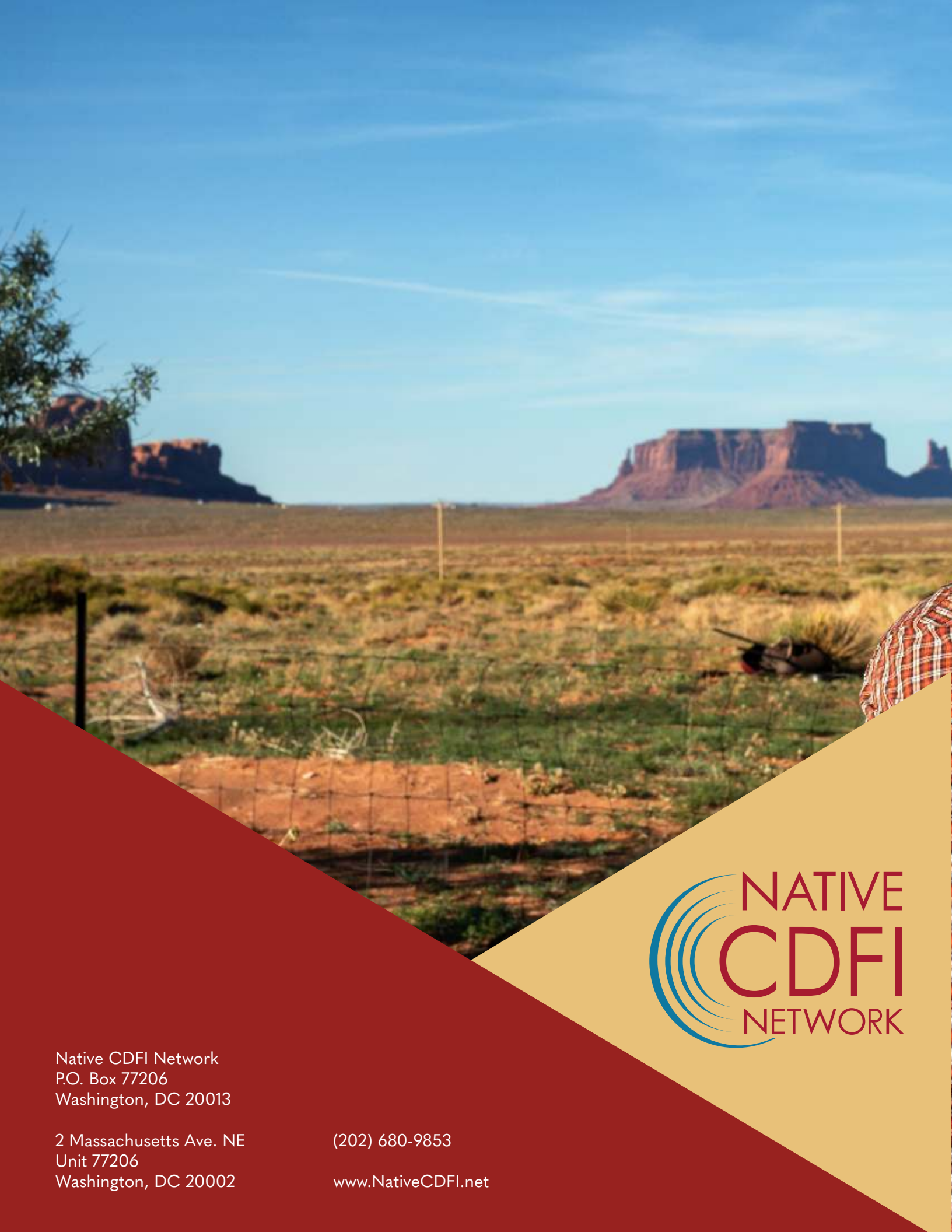
Executive Director

Jackson Brossy (Navajo Nation)

Native CDFI Network



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