

# NACDI

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



# A Letter from the President & CEO

**Dear Friends, Relatives & Supporters of NACDI;**

Looking back over the year 2021, I am filled with gratitude for the support of so many community partners, funders, and especially community members. This was a year of changes, and challenges. At NACDI, and in the Native community more broadly, we responded with growth and strength.

Our theme at NACDI throughout 2021 has been one of strategic, regulated growth. Consistent with our Change Plan for growth, NACDI increased staff by two full time positions. The addition of an administrative/executive assistant and a dedicated development director had a synergistic impact on our capacity. We are feeling stronger as we better define each staff members' role, and how we can best engage everyone's gifts and talents to serve our organization and community.

As an organization we became stronger by investing in our staff, as professionals and as people. We provided professional training in a range of areas, like project management and in specific fields. We also invested in our systems by implementing tools to improve workflow and communications. As we continue to address the challenges of the pandemic era and remote work, we provided life and professional coaching to all staff members. We also engaged Native elders and cultural carriers to provide us with guidance and support. These investments will continue to benefit NACDI and the community for years to come.

The covid era has presented many challenges to working in, and with, community. Even so, NACDI was able to grow and strengthen our partnerships. We have done groundbreaking work to center Native voices in development, like at the lock and dam in Minneapolis's central riverfront; in healthy food access with the establishment of the Four Sisters Urban Farm; and in civic engagement with our long established project Make Voting A Tradition. Our arts work with All My Relations Arts continues to be a focus point for the Native, and broader, community.

All of this progress depends on you, our friends and partners. For that we are very grateful.

**Pidamaya & Miigwech,  
Robert Lillgren, President & CEO  
White Earth Ojibwe**





# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Strengthening Ourselves, Growing Community

In 2021, despite the ongoing pandemic, NACDI had a strong year of growth. This is a testament to our Board of Directors, staff, partner organizations, funders, artists, and community members.

We began the year with a stellar installation for **Illuminate the Lock**, Madweyaashkaa: Waves Can Be Heard by Moira Villiard. This piece celebrated the resilience of Indigenous women and was presented as part of Bring Her Home: Sacred Womxn of Resistance, an annual exhibition at All My Relations Arts gallery that invites Indigenous artists to reflect on the epidemic of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. The spectacular scale of this project brought many people back into community together for the first time since the pandemic began.

Next, we celebrated our inaugural **Seed Week**, a week-long community collaboration that sprang from our Native Authors program. Seed Week was a celebration of seeds through storytelling, art, music, gardening demonstrations, and the book release of Diane Wilson's latest publication, *The Seed Keeper*. Seed Week represents planting cultural seeds. Since many of the authors' writing content is connected to their Native identities, Seed Week allows us to highlight that cultural exchange of knowledge with our general audience.

**Seed Week**  
MARCH 8-12 · 2021  
AN INTERTRIBAL, INTERDISCIPLINARY, AND INTERGENERATIONAL CELEBRATION OF SEEDS THROUGH STORIES, MUSIC, GARDENING, AND ART.

**MONDAY MARCH 8 6:30-8:30 P.M.**  
TRADITIONAL SEED STORYTELLING

**TUESDAY MARCH 9 7-8 P.M.**  
BOOK LAUNCH

**WEDNESDAY MARCH 10 7-8 P.M.**  
SEED PLANTING WORKSHOP

**THURSDAY MARCH 11 7-8 P.M.**  
SUNFLOWER COOKIE YOUTH LEADER COOKING DEMO

**FRIDAY MARCH 12 2-3:30 P.M.**  
SEED CELEBRATION ART, MUSIC, & PANEL

WWW.ALLMYRELATIONSARTS.COM/SEED-WEEK

Logos: NACDI, Friends of the Oak Lake Library, Hennepin County Library, Seed Savers Exchange, Birchbark Books, mikweed, NAIFA, Dream of a Wild Health.



## **We expanded our staff in April and May.**

First we brought on Juleana Enright as our All My Relations Arts Gallery Assistant. Juleana (they/them) is a queer, Indigenous writer, curator, theatre artist and DJ living in Minneapolis. They are a member of the Oglala Lakota Tribe of South Dakota. They have brought their expertise and enthusiasm for reclaiming Native joy through existence, resilience and expression. In May, we hired John Williams, a member of the Cheyenne River Tribe, as our new Development Director. John brings 25 years of non-profit experience in grant writing, corporate and foundation relations, and individual and family giving.

To prepare for the future we brought together our Board of Directors and our staff for strategic planning sessions. This leadership team worked to set the stage for measured growth for NACDI as we continue to discover new and innovative ways to serve our community.



**In June, the Four Sisters Farmers Market launched its eighth season** providing high-quality, hyper-local produce and food products on the American Indian Cultural Corridor. With new vendors and educational partners, the Market reached an all-time attendance record. We introduced food demos and tastings with our partners which were hugely popular.



**In addition, we continued to break ground** and began planting additional trees on the Four Sisters Urban Farm site that is located in the East Phillips neighborhood along 29th Street between Bloomington and 18th Avenues. Our three goals for the Farm are to:

1. Advance Indigenous food sovereignty,
2. Strengthen farmer to consumer enterprises, and
3. Reverse health disparities in our Urban Indian communities.



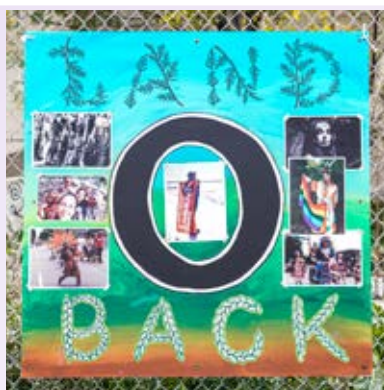
**The summer and early fall brought us to a number of community events** and political candidate forums that highlighted our Make Voting A Tradition (MVAT) project. MVAT had a banner year as the project has expanded to develop a Statewide Native Table with tribal and rural communities across Minnesota. Our fearless lead organizer, Jolene Jones, is blazing trails through educating our communities on redistricting and voter engagement and even testified in front of the Minnesota state legislature in the fall.







**September saw the installation of “N-E-V-E-R H-O-M-E-L-E-S-S- B-E-F-O-R-E 1-4-9-2”.** NACDI partnered with the Minnesota Department of Transportation in the creation of a temporary art installation located on the chain-link fence currently at the site of The Wall of Forgotten Natives, a former homeless encampment. We contracted artist Courtney Cochran to lead the artistic design, community engagement, and community art fabrication of the project. The artwork is composed of 23 4’x4’ fluted polymer panels that each have a letter in the foreground and visual imagery of a relevant Native topic or theme in the background.





**In October NACDI and AMRA were featured in the New York Times article:**  
“In Minneapolis, A Thriving Center for Indigenous Art.”



The mural, “Hearts of Our People” on the facade of All My Relations gallery in Minneapolis created by Natchez Beaulieu with a team of young female artists. Jaida Grey Eagle for The New York Times



A still from Santo Aveiro-Ojeda's "1870: Cyberpunk Forever" Santo Aveiro-Ojeda



"Bring Her Home" at All My Relations ARTS via All My Relations ARTS

**As the year drew to a close, we celebrated our collaboration with the Emerging Curators Institute (ECI) for biskaabiiyang (returning to ourselves) a group exhibition investigating Indigenous Futurisms and the interconnectedness of nows through video installation, interactive gaming, mixed media and digital illustrations curated by ECI Fellow, Juleana Enright our new AMRA Gallery Assistant.**

**We were overwhelmed this year by the sheer enthusiasm that our community has for NACDI and its signature programs. By prioritizing staff and board capacity, investing in our community and strategically planning for our future, NACDI is strengthening its mission and vision.**



**NACDI and our arts program and gallery All My Relations Arts (AMRA) works to heal the** impacts of five centuries of genocide and forced assimilation. NACDI assumed ownership and operations of AMRA in 2010 and the gallery grew into a major regional hub for Native contemporary art, artists, and arts professionals. Engaging with Native artists and community is standard practice for NACDI/AMRA with art playing a central strategy in this work. Our professional artists amplify contemporary issues facing the Native community. Our gallery provides Native artists with a high-profile venue, provides career growth and development and creates access to contemporary Native arts for both Native and non-Native audiences. AMRA is one of the few Midwest repositories for contemporary Native visual artists and has become an important place for advancing the careers of Native artists and arts professionals through mentorships, residencies, and place making opportunities.



**Make Voting A Tradition (MVAT) is a culturally specific, year-round, multi-generational** approach to increase voter turnout and civic engagement. The fundamental principle of MVAT is that Native Americans are more likely to become more politically active when engaged by peers. MVAT has created partnerships with local, statewide, and national efforts to increase turnout in BIPOC, and other traditionally low-turnout groups.

By utilizing MVAT's statewide and national profile, the project continues to establish and nurture relationships that will strengthen the voices of individuals to create access and influence in elections. Now, in partnership with MN Voice, MVAT is spearheading a first of its kind Statewide Native Table focusing on civic engagement and voter mobilization.



**Four Sisters Farmers Market is an Indigenous-centered food market, focused on both** Indigenous and hyper-local foods from Phillips and surrounding neighborhoods. Working with native-run farms and food producers, we help develop a healthy, Indigenous food system that is accessible and welcoming to people in the American Indian Cultural Corridor.

Hennepin County is working with NACDI and Four Sisters to transform three adjacent vacant lots owned by the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) near the Midtown Greenway in Minneapolis into an urban farm and a community gathering place. NACDI will operate the Four Sisters Farm on the site to provide access to fresh healthy foods and serve as a learning environment for Indigenous farming, medicine, and lifeways.



# Organizational Overview

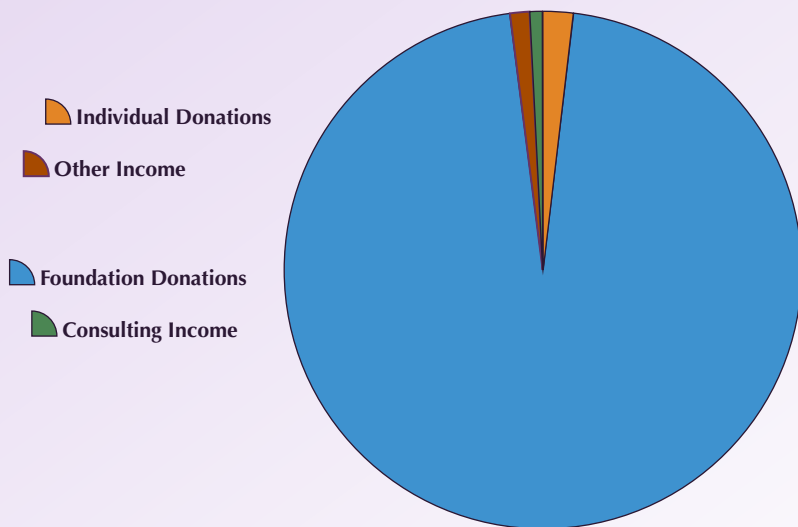
Native American Community Development Institute's (NACDI) work is founded on the belief that all American Indian people have a place, purpose, and a future strengthened by sustainable asset-based community development. Since 2007, NACDI's work facilitates systems change through our integrated pathways of Community Engagement, Community Organizing, Community Development, and Indigenous Arts and Culture. NACDI utilizes these strategies to control our narrative, influence policy, and lead systems change while shifting power dynamics through shared Native values, traditions, cultures, and practices.

These are community-led efforts to secure self-directed wealth building in the American Indian community. NACDI partners with a wide network of Native and non-Native individuals and organizations to create a vibrant, healthy, and balanced community with economic opportunities for Native people. NACDI's key projects include: All My Relations Arts, Four Sisters Farmers Market and Urban Farm, and Make Voting A Tradition (MVAT). NACDI is building a vibrant future for all our relations.

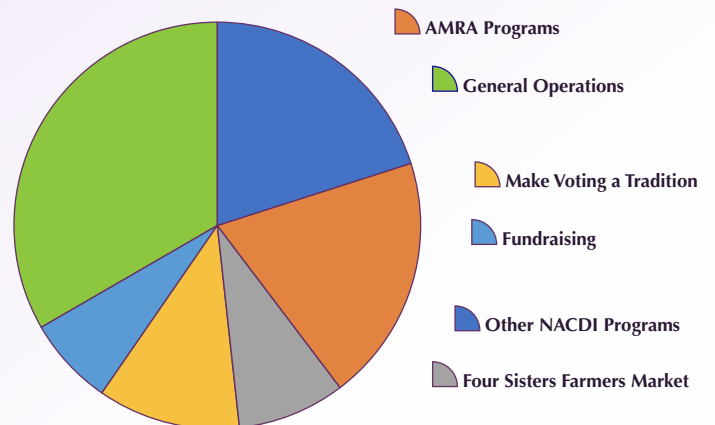
## 2021 Financials

NACDI endeavors to be a good steward of the funds we receive from foundations, corporations, government agencies, and individuals. Here is a chart of our revenue and expenses broken down by board categories.

### 2021 Funding Sources



### 2021 Expenses Based On Program



Part of being a good steward is transparency, so NACDI provides our detailed tax form 990 on our website for review.



# Thank You



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Committee:

Chair: Sam Olbekson

Vice-Chair: Deanna Standing Cloud

Secretary: Christine McDonald

Treasurer & Finance Committee Chair: Heid Erdrich

Peter McLaughlin 4th District Hennepin County Commissioner

Mihailo Temali ED MN LISC

## CREDITS

Photography:

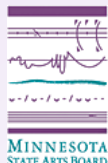
Never Homeless Before 1492 - King Demetrius Pendleton

All My Relations Arts Gallery Building - Nicole Thomas

Robert - Ne-Dah-Ness Greene

New York Times Article Images - Jaida Grey Eagle

Graphic Design - Dennis Madamba



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature; and by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.