

Baltimore Yearly Meeting Indigenous Affairs Committee Annual Report July, 2026

Publication of Data Update Report

Our committee received BYM funding for a project to update a comprehensive 2009 report issued by FCNL that captures essential demographic and other



To download *Quick Facts*, center this in your phone's camera.

information about Native Americans. Among the topics are facts about Native health, education, housing, employment and infrastructure. To complete the update, we engaged the services of Alexis Contreras, a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community. Ms. Contreras demonstrated her experience as a researcher at the National Indian Child Welfare Association. Committee members and Pat Powers, former committee chair, edited and commented on versions of the document, working closely with Ms. Contreras.

This year, we were able to finalize the report, *Quick Facts About Indigenous Americans*. The expanded update now includes Native Alaskans and Native Hawaiians to the extent possible. These populations were not part of the original FCNL document. We disseminated the report in printed form to a wide range of contacts of current and former members. In addition, our Clerk attended the annual session of the National Congress of American Indians and distributed copies. In September of this year, committee member Abbey Compton will attend the annual sovereignty conference of Virginia tribes and has received permission to distribute copies there as well. At each venue, we also provided information on how to download the document in digital form, which we think may be more useful, especially to Tribes writing grant applications or offering education. We were pleased that the document received a positive review from *Friends Journal* and plan to place an ad there to further publicize its availability among Friends.

Information Dissemination

The IAC continues to publish the *Indigenous Affairs Quarterly (IAQ)*. The quarterly features news, resources, historical information, and upcoming events. It

is sent to identified contacts at Monthly Meetings and others who have expressed interest. All editions are posted on the committee's website, with a link to the latest issue included in BYM's newsletter. Members of the committee routinely provide information for inclusion in the issue. The editor is Susannah Rose. If you want to be put on the list to receive a copy, contact her at susanhillsrose@gmail.com.

At the 2025 Annual Session, the committee prepared a table with resources, resource lists, maps, and other information for BYM meetings.

Conference Attendance and Support

We believe that an excellent way to establish relationships with Native Tribes and understand current issues is to attend conferences where non-native allies are welcomed. One such meeting is the annual Sovereignty Conference of Virginia Tribes, led by Chief Anne Richardson of the Rappahanock Tribe. In 2025, our Clerk attended the conference. In 2026, we expanded our commitment to Virginia Tribes by sponsoring a table at the conference, and a committee member plans to attend.

We have also had a member in attendance for both the 2025 and the 2026 annual meetings of the National Congress of American Indians. Held in Washington, D.C., the Congress hears updates on issues of national importance and lobbies members of Congress to protect Native rights and interests.

Members who attend these meetings report back to inform members. Key learnings are also highlighted in the IAQ.

Other Committee Activities

The committee was asked to find a speaker for the 2026 annual session and devoted considerable effort to this. Three prospective speakers did not work out, but we succeeded in confirming the availability of a distinguished speaker to address the key issue of Tribal sovereignty, only to hear the speakers committee had decided to sponsor a film instead. We hope that communication in the future will be more timely, informing us of essential deadlines and changing direction. This will prevent our having to tell the speaker who had agreed to address us that we were no longer interested, which was acutely embarrassing.

At each meeting, members share what they have been learning and any activities in which they have been engaged. We have developed a list of resources, including

Native news publications, which members can follow to appreciate emerging actions. These have led us to provide input on Federal initiatives and take other advocacy steps. While we have been listening for leadings for the committee as a whole, so far these have not emerged. We will keep listening.

Composition of Committee

Members for 2025-26 include Susannah Rose (Clerk), Steve Tatum, Sharon Stout, Bill Mims, Abbey Compton, John Meyer, Betty Smallwood, Stuart Green, and Dan Cole. Dellie James, a seasoned former member, frequently attended and will be rejoining the committee. We have benefitted from strong support from former members Sue Marcus and Pat Powers. In 2026-27, Susannah Rose will be leaving the committee but will continue to edit the IAQ if this is the committee's wish. We will welcome new member Rob Torres, a Lumbee Tribe member who attends Frederick Meeting. Two additional Quakers have recently expressed interest; their names are being forwarded to the Nominating Committee for follow-up.