

NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN CENTER OF CENTRAL OHIO (NAICCO)

Strategic Communications Plan

Last Update: August 2024

Created by UpRys, LLC

Document Purpose

The purpose of the communications plan for the Native American Indian Center of Central Ohio (NAICCO) is to strategically guide the organization's messaging and outreach efforts, ensuring alignment with its mission of cultural preservation, economic development, and community engagement. The plan aims to effectively connect with diverse audiences, including donors, sponsors, and community members, by conveying NAICCO's values, priorities, and initiatives, such as the Landback NAICCO campaign. It also ensures that all communications are culturally sensitive, genuine, and reflective of the organization's commitment to fostering a sense of belonging and harmony within the community.

Background

The Native American Indian Center of Central Ohio (NAICCO) was founded in 1975 by Selma Sully-Walker, a member of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota tribe. Initially, she was employed by the Manpower program to assist Native Americans in Columbus with job placements and other needs. Recognizing the need for a central hub for the urban Native American population, she and others worked tirelessly, even selling bait to local fishing stores, to fund the purchase of a duplex on South High Street, which became the first home for NAICCO. Over her years of service, Selma's dedication earned her numerous accolades, including induction into the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame in 1986.

After Selma's passing in 1997, leadership transitioned to Mark and Carol Welsh, who were instrumental in maintaining the center's legacy. They emphasized the teachings of the medicine wheel, which provided a strong cultural foundation during their tenure.

Since 2011, Ty and Masami Smith have led NAICCO. Both are members of The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs in Oregon, and they have brought new energy to the organization. Under their leadership, NAICCO has not only preserved its foundational mission but also expanded its impact. Notable initiatives include the Landback NAICCO campaign, which focuses on land reclamation and cultural restoration, and NAICCO Cuisine, a unique food trailer that brings Native American street food to Central Ohio, providing both cultural outreach and economic opportunities for the Native community.

Today, NAICCO remains a vital resource for Native Americans in Ohio, offering a "home away from home" where individuals can connect with their heritage and community.

Mission

The Native American Indian Center of Central Ohio (NAICCO) has a mission devoted to preserving and restoring balance in the lives of Native Americans through initiatives rooted in traditional, cultural, educational, family, and community values.

Focus areas include cultural preservation/restoration, social development, and economic development/sustainability

Core Values

Our values aren't just principles—they're the emotional threads that weave through everything we do at NAICCO. They shape our community, creating a space where every Native American feels a deep sense of belonging and pride. These values guide us in our mission to preserve our culture, support our people, and honor the wisdom passed down through generations. Together, they help us build a home where respect, compassion, and truth are lived daily, fostering a community that uplifts and empowers all who are a part of it.

- **Prayer:** At the heart of everything we do is prayer—a moment to connect with something greater, grounding us in our cultural roots and guiding our every step. It's more than a ritual; it's the spirit that breathes life into our community.
- **Respect:** We honor the dignity of every individual, recognizing that each person carries a piece of our shared history. Respect isn't just a value; it's the foundation of our relationships, ensuring that every voice is heard and every tradition is cherished.
- **Compassion:** Compassion is the warmth in our welcome, the helping hand extended to those in need. We see our community members as family, where every act of kindness strengthens the bonds that unite us.
- **Truth:** Truth is our commitment to authenticity, to telling our stories as they are—unfiltered and real. Being true to who we are, we honor the wisdom of our ancestors and share our journey with honesty and integrity.
- **Generosity:** Generosity flows from the heart, inspiring us to give back to our community in ways that uplift and empower. Whether through sharing food, knowledge, or support, we are creating a circle of giving that enriches us all.
- **Humility:** With humility, we recognize that we are all learners on this journey, approaching our work with an open heart—ready to listen, grow, and be guided by the wisdom of our elders and the needs of our people.
- **Wisdom:** Wisdom is the light that guides us, drawn from the deep well of our cultural heritage. We make decisions that honor our past, nurture our present, and protect our future, ensuring the lessons of our ancestors continue to lead the way.

Services, Programs, and Initiatives

Community and Social Development:

NAICCO provides a range of services that aim to improve the overall quality of life for Native Americans in Ohio. This includes:

- **Educational Programs:** Support for educational development, including resources for academic achievement and cultural education, ensuring that community

members have access to learning opportunities that respect and integrate their cultural heritage.

- **Family Assistance:** Services designed to assist Native American families with various needs, such as financial support, childcare, and access to social services. This helps families navigate challenges while maintaining their cultural identity and community connections.
- **Community Engagement:** Activities and events that foster a sense of belonging and unity within the Native American community. These engagements help build stronger connections among community members and provide platforms for cultural exchange and mutual support.

Wellness Initiatives:

Our health and wellness programs embrace the whole person—body, mind, and spirit—by blending the wisdom of our traditional practices with modern approaches, ensuring our community thrives in every way.

- **Physical Health:** Programs that encourage physical wellness, possibly including fitness activities, health education, and access to healthcare resources that respect traditional healing practices.
- **Mental Health:** Support for mental well-being through counseling, mental health awareness, and services that address the specific challenges faced by Native Americans, integrating cultural practices with modern mental health care.
- **Spiritual Health:** Emphasis on spiritual well-being, incorporating traditional Native American spiritual practices into wellness programs. This includes community rituals, spiritual guidance, and cultural activities that reinforce a strong spiritual connection,

Programs:

- **Cultural Preservation and Restoration:** A program dedicated to preserving Native American culture through events, activities, and educational efforts that pass down traditions, languages, and practices to future generations.
 - **Language Revitalization:** Efforts to preserve and teach Native languages, which are crucial to maintaining cultural identity. This might include language classes, workshops, and resources for both young and older members of the community.
 - **Traditional Practices and Ceremonies:** The program often involves the organization and celebration of traditional ceremonies, dances, and rituals that are vital to the community's cultural expression. These events serve as a way to pass down customs and rituals that have been practiced for generations.
 - **Cultural Education:** Educational programs that teach the history, art, and spiritual practices of Native American culture. This can include partnerships

with schools, cultural institutions, and community workshops aimed at both Native and non-Native audiences.

- **Craft and Art Preservation:** Programs dedicated to preserving traditional Native American crafts, such as beadwork, pottery, and weaving. These activities not only keep the skills alive but also provide opportunities for economic development and cultural exchange.
- **Intergenerational Learning:** An emphasis on connecting younger generations with elders to ensure that cultural knowledge and traditions are passed down directly, fostering a strong sense of identity and continuity within the community.
- **Community Engagement:** Regular cultural events that bring the community together, such as powwows, storytelling sessions, and cultural festivals. These gatherings reinforce a shared cultural identity and promote the values of respect, community, and mutual support.
- **NAICCO Cuisine:** This program involves a food trailer offering Native American street food. It serves as both an economic opportunity for community members and a means of sharing Native culture with the broader public.

Initiatives:

- **Landback NAICCO:** An initiative focused on reclaiming and preserving Native lands, with an emphasis on reconnecting with the land's cultural and spiritual foundation. This initiative is making significant progress toward its goal of purchasing land to create a dedicated space for the Native American community in Central Ohio.
 - As of July 2024, the campaign has raised over \$362,000, with the immediate goal of acquiring at least 20 acres of land. The campaign is focused not just on land ownership but on creating a place where Native traditions, culture, and community can thrive.
 - This initiative is part of a broader effort to reconnect with and preserve Native lands, ensuring that future generations have a place to gather and express their cultural identity.
 - The campaign's success so far is a testament to the strong support from the community and donors, but the work is far from over. The next steps include carefully selecting the right piece of land and possibly increasing the fundraising target to \$400,000 to ensure the best possible outcome for the community.
 - **CTA:** If you're interested in supporting the Landback NAICCO initiative, there are several ways to get involved:
 - **Donate:** Financial contributions are crucial. You can donate directly or even bequeath assets to NAICCO.
 - **Spread the Word:** Share the campaign with friends, family, and your social networks to raise awareness.

- **Start a Fundraiser:** Consider starting a personal crowdfunding campaign or fundraiser to support the initiative.

Stakeholders and Primary Contacts

Name	Title	Email
Ty Smith	Project Director	naicco1975@gmail.com
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Target Audiences

Target Audience	Who	Why	Goal
Urban Native Americans in Ohio	Native individuals and families living in Central Ohio.	Central to NAICCO's mission of cultural preservation, community support, and wellness.	Provide cultural programming, social services, and a sense of belonging; strengthen cultural identity.
Native Youth	Young Native Americans in Ohio, including students and youth groups.	Ensure the continuity of Native traditions and cultural knowledge across generations.	Offer educational and cultural programs that engage youth in their heritage and community activities.
Donors and Philanthropists	Individuals, foundations, and organizations supporting Native American causes and land reclamation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Columbus Foundation (recognized NAICCO as a top nonprofit to watch in 2024). • Private Donors (Supporting the Landback NAICCO campaign) 	Financially support initiatives like Landback NAICCO and NAICCO Cuisine.	Secure funding to purchase land, expand programs, and ensure long-term sustainability.
Local Businesses and Corporations	Businesses in Central Ohio interested in community	Partner with NAICCO for sponsorships and	Develop partnerships for sponsorship,

	engagement and social responsibility.	support local Native initiatives.	community events, and joint ventures like NAICCO Cuisine.
Government Agencies	Local and federal government bodies supporting Native American affairs and land reclamation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ohio Department of Education (Supporting educational initiatives for Native youth). • City of Columbus Department of Human Services (Supporting community development) 	Collaborate on land acquisition, cultural preservation, and social services.	Gain support for policies and programs that benefit the Native American community in Ohio.
Academic Institutions	Universities and research centers, such as Ohio State University, interested in Indigenous studies.	Promote research, cultural exchange, and educational opportunities for Native students.	Establish collaborations for research, internships, and cultural programs that benefit Native youth.
General Public	Residents of Central Ohio and visitors interested in Native American culture and cuisine.	Raise awareness about Native American culture and NAICCO's mission through public outreach.	Engage with the broader community to build cultural bridges, raise awareness, and foster inclusivity.
Media and Cultural Organizations	Local and national media, cultural institutions like museums, and Indigenous advocacy groups.	Amplify NAICCO's message, raise awareness, and increase visibility of Native issues.	Increase media coverage, promote cultural events, and build partnerships that elevate NAICCO's profile.

Key Messages

Members/Prospects

Reconnect with your roots and join a thriving community that celebrates Native culture and supports your journey home.

Come home to a community that honors your heritage and supports your journey. Reconnect with your roots at NAICCO.

Discover your heritage and join programs designed to empower and educate Native youth, ensuring the preservation of our traditions.

Find your place in our community. Engage in programs that empower you to carry forward the traditions and values of your ancestors

Support holistic health initiatives that integrate traditional Native practices with modern wellness approaches.

Immerse yourself in authentic Native American experiences. Participate in NAICCO's cultural events and workshops.

Help us create a home for Native art and culture. Collaborate on projects that celebrate and preserve our artistic heritage.

Partner with NAICCO to provide youth with opportunities to explore their cultural identity and develop leadership skills.

Donors

Your support helps us build a home for Native Americans in Ohio. Invest in a future where our culture and community can thrive.

Be part of creating a home for our community. Your support makes a lasting impact on Native American lives.

Help us bring our community home. Your contribution to the Landback NAICCO campaign will reclaim sacred land for future generations

Support the Landback NAICCO initiative and help us create a home that honors both the land and the traditions that connect us to it.

Make a difference today. Your contribution to the Landback NAICCO campaign can help reclaim and preserve sacred lands.

Be part of the change. Support NAICCO's initiatives and witness the positive impact on Native communities

By investing in NAICCO, you're not just supporting a cause—you're securing a future where the rich heritage of Native American culture flourishes and provides a home for generations to come. Together, we can keep the spirit of our people alive and thriving.

Community Partners

Partner with NAICCO to help us build a home for Native Americans in Ohio, strengthening community ties and supporting local culture.

Collaborate with us to create educational programs that make NAICCO a home for learning about Native American history and culture.

Work with NAICCO to ensure our community has the resources it needs to feel at home in Central Ohio.

Join us in policy and cultural preservation efforts to create a secure and lasting home for Native Americans in Ohio.

Join forces with NAICCO in policy advocacy and cultural preservation efforts, ensuring the rights and heritage of Native Americans are upheld.

Partner with NAICCO to enhance your corporate social responsibility and strengthen ties with the local Native community.

Support educational programs that integrate Native American history and culture, enriching the learning experience for all students.

Collaborate with NAICCO to provide essential services to Native families, promoting well-being and community strength.

Taglines

- *Preserving Culture, Reclaiming Home.*
- *Where Every Step Brings Us Closer to Home.*
- *Home to Our Heritage, Heart of Our Community.*
- *Home Is Where Our Story Begins.*
- *Reclaiming Our Land, Reviving Our Spirit.*
- *Nurturing Our Land, Honoring Our Ancestors.*
- *Building a Future Rooted in Tradition.*
- *Our Land, Our Heritage, Our Home.*
- *Where Every Path Leads Us Home.*
- *Where Land Meets Legacy, and Community Thrives.*
- *Building a Future Rooted in Tradition and Community.*
- *Reclaiming Our Past, Building Our Future.*
- *A Home for Healing, A Community for Growth.*

Hashtags

#PreservingCulture
#ReclaimingHome
#CloserToHome
#HomeToHeritage
#HeartOfCommunity
#OurStoryBeginsHere
#RevivingSpirit
#HonoringAncestors

#BuildingTradition
#OurLandOurHome
#LegacyAndCommunity
#RootedInTradition
#BuildingOurFuture
#HomeAndHealing
#NurturingLand

Communication Strategies and Tactics

To maximize engagement from target audiences, this plan will adopt an active communications posture. Active communication—unlike reactive, passive, or crisis communications—generates more impact with less risk, as it is strategically planned.

This plan uses a layered approach to deliver key messages to audiences, with a goal of sharing unique messages no fewer than five to seven times through various formats, channels, and messengers.

An omni-channel approach will deliver key messages and artifacts broadly, ensuring target audiences receive clear, compelling messages across a variety of channels and through multiple messengers.

Strategically, the omni-channel and product approach will:

- **Establish a Consistent Drumbeat:** Focus on communicating and engaging key internal and external audiences early and often.
- **Prioritize Internal Communication:** Begin with intensive internal communication efforts (emails, staff meetings, intranet) to ensure every team member understands and supports the merger before public announcements are made.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Once internal teams are aligned, engage external stakeholders such as board members, donors, and community partners through targeted communications (newsletters, leadership briefings) that outline strategic benefits and solicit their support.
- **Public Launch:** After securing internal and stakeholder buy-in, proceed with public-facing communications (press releases, social media, website updates) to announce the merger broadly and manage public perception effectively.
- **Deliver Meaningful and Actionable Information:** Inform, engage, and build support for NAICCO through relevant and impactful content.
- **Create a Push-and-Pull Dynamic:** Implement a strategy that not only delivers (pushes) information and products but also engages (pulls) audience feedback to support an agile communications approach.

- **Leverage Third-Party Allies:** Utilize partners and allies to share and promote NAICCO’s messages and products.
- **Amplify Messages Year-Round:** Spread NAICCO’s messages through continuous storytelling that highlights success stories throughout the year.

Recommended products and activities to distribute key messages include, but are not limited to:

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| Brand Guide | Press Releases |
| Website Updates | Interviews |
| Social Media Posts | Blogs/Stories |
| Emails/Newsletters | Op Eds |
| Fact Sheets/Infographics | Press Conferences |
| Videos | Case Studies |
| Testimonials | |

Channels & Target Audiences

Channel	Why	Target Audience
Website Updates	Central hub for campaign information, progress tracking, and donations.	General public, donors, sponsors, community members
Social Media	Broad reach and engagement through shareable content (Facebook, Instagram, X).	Native community, donors, youth, general public
Email Outreach	Direct communication with existing supporters for updates and calls to action.	Donors, sponsors, community members, partners
Print Materials	Tangible way to share the campaign at events or in local businesses.	Local community members, businesses, potential sponsors
Press Releases	Increase visibility through local and national media coverage.	General public, donors, media, sponsors
Newsletters	Regular updates on campaign progress and events, reinforcing commitment.	Donors, community members, partners, sponsors
Video Content	Engaging, visual storytelling to humanize the campaign and its impact.	Donors, general public, youth, sponsors, media

Partnership Engagement	Leverage third-party organizations to amplify the message through their channels.	Businesses, universities, media, government agencies
Events (Virtual & In-Person)	Build community engagement, share progress, and celebrate milestones.	Local community, sponsors, donors, general public
NAICCO Cuisine (Food Trailer)	Use events and food trailer locations to distribute materials and discuss the campaign.	General public, local businesses, Native community

Landback NAICCO Campaign: Phase 2

The Landback NAICCO campaign has made significant progress in reclaiming Native land to create a cultural and spiritual home for Native Americans in Ohio. With over \$362,000 raised so far, the campaign is moving into its next phase to secure at least 20 acres of land where the community can gather, preserve traditions, and strengthen cultural identity. This land will serve as a space for ceremonies, education, and cultural restoration, ensuring that future generations have a place to call home. The next steps aim to build on this momentum, expand support, and move closer to realizing this vision.

Campaign Purpose

Continue Momentum:

- **Building on Success:** The initial phase demonstrated that there is strong interest and support for reclaiming Native land. By showcasing our progress and next steps, we reaffirm the importance of this initiative and remind our audience that they are part of something impactful.
- **Maintaining Trust and Engagement:** Momentum is key to keeping our donors and supporters actively engaged. Regular updates, success stories, and clear communication about how their contributions are making a difference ensure that their connection to the campaign remains strong.
- **Leveraging Excitement for Broader Impact:** The energy generated during the first phase creates opportunities to reach new audiences. By continuing this momentum, we can expand our donor base, media coverage, and partnerships, amplifying the campaign's reach and impact.

Build Sustainability:

- **Consistent Engagement:** A well-executed multi-channel strategy ensures that we remain visible and active across platforms. This consistent drumbeat of

communication keeps NAICCO’s mission at the forefront of people’s minds and positions the organization as a long-term, impactful initiative.

- **Diversified Support:** By engaging a broader audience through social media, email outreach, and in-person events, we tap into a diverse network of supporters—from grassroots donors to corporate partners. This variety of supporters will help sustain the campaign financially and culturally, ensuring long-term success.
- **Community-Centered Approach:** By continuously involving the community in meaningful ways—whether through storytelling, events, or volunteer opportunities—we strengthen the emotional and cultural connection to the land reclamation effort. This ensures that the initiative isn’t just a short-term project, but a lasting movement that’s deeply rooted in the people it serves.
- **Reinforcing the Mission:** Each communication reinforces the core mission of cultural preservation and land reclamation, providing a constant reminder that this is about more than land—it’s about a sustainable future for the Native community in Ohio. This keeps the campaign purpose-driven and relevant to both current and potential supporters.

Positioning Proposal

"Welcome Home: Building on Our Progress, Restoring Our Spirit"

This message highlights both the campaign’s success and the ongoing need for support. It invites people to join a growing movement that is already making a real difference.

Key Messaging Highlights:

- **Building Our Future:** "Landback NAICCO has already made great strides. Now, we need your support to bring this vision to life."
- **Restoring Our Connection:** "This campaign is about continuing our journey to reconnect with the land and secure a future for our community."
- **Come Home:** "Help us build on our progress and create a lasting home where our culture can thrive."

Goals, Tactics & Measurement

Goal	Tactics (Channels)	Measurement/Success Indicators
1. Sustain and Increase Donor Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular email updates with campaign progress - Personalized thank-you emails and donor recognition on social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased email open/click-through rates - Number of repeat donations

2. Broaden Campaign Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media posts highlighting progress - Press releases and media outreach - Video storytelling (social and website) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media reach (likes, shares, comments) - Number of media mentions/coverage - Website traffic growth
3. Deepen Community Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Host virtual/in-person events to celebrate milestones - Share community member stories on social media, newsletters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Event attendance (virtual/in-person) - Engagement with stories (shares, likes, comments)
4. Expand Partnerships for Sponsorships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outreach to local businesses via email and meetings - Highlight NAICCO Cuisine and community impact in newsletters, press 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of new sponsors or partnerships - Sponsorship revenue growth
5. Continue to Build Trust and Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Website updates with clear, transparent campaign milestones - Regular email and social media progress reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive feedback from surveys or emails - Increased donations after updates
6. Encourage Grassroots Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equip supporters with shareable social media content and fundraising tools (templates, graphics) - Peer-to-peer fundraising campaigns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of peer-led fundraising efforts - Donations generated from grassroots efforts
7. Amplify Media and Public Exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pitch exclusive interviews or stories to media outlets - Develop press releases for key milestones - Partner with influencers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of media mentions or features - Increase in website/social media followers
8. Enhance Community Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leverage NAICCO Cuisine events to engage with the public - Distribute campaign materials at food trailer locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of new email sign-ups at events - New donations or sponsors sourced from events