



National Indian Head Start Directors Association

Standing Strong and Preserving the Identity of AIAN Children and Families

Membership Benefits and Services

NIHSDA provides AIAN programs with the information needed in order to provide quality services. It is a source for new and veteran directors of help, guidance, and clarification of information coming out of the Office of Head Start. NIHSDA fights for the best interests of tribal communities and supports programs in the implementation of federal regulations. The association has a long standing history of helping programs develop the skills needed to become self-sustaining, especially during periods of transition.

NIHSDA provides a unified voice for tribal children and families and is constantly working to ensure that the unique needs of tribal programs are taken into account by Congress and the Office of Head Start. It is a quality reference point for issues that pertain to native children and provides feedback and evaluation of early childhood development in culturally appropriate settings.

Advocacy – NIHSDA is the leading voice on issues and concerns affecting Head Start programs in American Indian and Alaska Native communities. Using input from members, NIHSDA develops an Advocacy Agenda for educating and informing Congress on AIAN HS/EHS specific legislation. NIHSDA also prepares and shares with tribal leaders AIAN specific talking points for Office of Head Start Tribal Consultations.



Annual Management Training Conference— The goal of the conference is to assist programs with emerging accountability across all levels of management and leadership. It provides opportunities to enhance professional skills, leadership ability, promote advocacy, and increase networking among peers. Attendance is open to all, and members receive a reduced registration rate.



NIHSDA Listserv—Open to members only, the listserv provides members the opportunity to seek information, guidance and other support from their colleagues. The listserv is used by the Association to update members on federal legislative issues, federal agency regulations, systems and requirements, general information on early childhood development and education, and provides a forum for dialogue and information sharing.

Discounted Rate on Teaching Strategies GOLD online—Through a partnership with NIHSDA, Teaching Strategies offers a discounted rate per child on the child assessment system (Teaching Strategies GOLD) to NIHSDA members.

Professional Organization Membership—NIHSDA is approved by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition as a “National Professional Organization,” which staff need to meet professional association requirements for the CDA credential. Member

programs receive free membership to NIHSDA for all program staff.

Toni Dobrec and Kathryn Helsel Award of Excellence—Open to all staff of programs that are members of NIHSDA, this award recognizes the accomplishments of HS/EHS staff. Recipients of this award have demonstrated their knowledge and commitment to their program and community through their service and leadership. They have contributed positively to the lives of native children and families and serve as an advocate for HS/EHS.

Newsletter—NIHSDA’s Native Head Start Leadership Quarterly includes Head Start success stories, director tips, legislative updates, training opportunities, and more.

Website—The NIHSDA website contains training materials, director resources, AIAN early childhood job opportunities, a consultant directory, advocacy resources, and the latest OHS announcements such as funding opportunities, guidance, and final rulings.