



**Summer Internship and Ash Center's Summer Fellowship  
Proposals  
Native Americans in the Twenty-First Century  
Summer 2021**

Initial Contact: Eric Henson, Chickasaw Citizen and Adjunct Lecturer  
ehenson@compasslexecon.com  
eric\_henson@harvard.edu  
617-216-1754 (cell)

Host Tribe #1: **Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe**  
Host Tribe #2: **Ho-Chunk Nation**  
Host Tribe #3: **Nenana Native Village**  
Host Tribe #4: **Santa Ana Pueblo**  
Host Tribe #5: **Southern Ute Indian Tribe**  
Host Tribe #6: **National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association**

**INTERNSHIP/FELLOWSHIP  
OVERVIEW**

The following internship/fellowship opportunities focus on some of the major issues Native American tribes and nations face as they seek to assert rights of self-determination in the 21st Century. The projects available provide in-depth, hands-on exposure to development issues faced by American Indians: sovereignty, economic development, constitutional reform, leadership, health and social welfare, land and water rights, culture and language preservation, religious freedom, finance and budgeting, and education.

An initial Zoom meeting with Eric Henson is required to facilitate introduction to the hosting tribes. In addition, Eric Henson will be available to advise and consult with the intern(s)/fellow(s) as needed throughout the summer. It is anticipated that the work will culminate in a production of a high-quality research paper or presentation for the hosting tribes. The hosting tribes are open to considering all Harvard University students for these positions. In addition, there is flexibility for the intern(s)/fellow(s) to work with the tribal hosts to further define and/or expand the work described below.

## **Host Tribe #1**

### **Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe**

#### **Economic Diversification – First Light Oysters**

HUNAP's Nation Building II class undertook an analysis of First Light Oysters in 2016. We would like to have that work updated, with a particular emphasis on ways in which we can ensure that our oyster farm is a viable ongoing commercial enterprise, which plays a part in the Mashpee Wampanoag diversifying its economy in an effort to ensure a sustainable future for our people.

First Light Oysters was launched in 2009 as an environmental stewardship effort that aligns with the tribe's long history of shell fishing. The oyster farm was the tribe's first business and has served as a successful example of the tribe's capacity to operate a business enterprise that is in line with its traditional practices and values.

The oyster farm was initially funded through a grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Recently however, the farm has been transitioned over to the Community Development Corporation, which seeks to work with students to prepare a study or business plan that will help put the farm on a path to self-sustainability, and profitability, so that the business venture can provide jobs and income for tribal citizens.

## **Host Tribe #2**

### **Ho-Chunk Nation**

#### **Constructing Data for the Future**

What data should the Ho-Chunk Nation be collecting from its members that can be utilized for advancing individual and tribal welfare? How can we best collect this data in a manner that maintains cultural and historical relevance, while respecting privacy and inherent sovereignty? The Nation's data collection efforts are driven by project and grant specific demand. We have a small demographic of approximately 7,800 tribal members. However, the Nation also provides some services to the immediate family of tribal members, but relatively few services to non-enrolled, non-eligible descendants of tribal members. The Nation has relatively few resources to address its needs. What data would support strategic and efficient consideration of funding? At present, the Legislature makes fiduciary decisions based upon available information, as well as anecdotal evidence. What are some data points that may assist the Nation in recognizing inefficiencies, health or welfare trends, or community needs that are currently being overlooked? Some data may also be used to secure funding to alleviate those issues, concerns, or epidemics.

### **Host Tribe #3**

#### **Nenana Native Village**

##### **Protecting Indigenous Ways of Life**

In Alaska, Indigenous People are highly reliant on fish and wildlife, including marine mammals and migratory birds, for their subsistence or traditional food resources. In rural Alaska, these traditional foods are at risk due to climate change. In addition, sport hunting by outside residents (through guided hunts) and commercial fishing are routinely prioritized, overshadowing needs of Indigenous residents, especially rural residents. During times of extreme change and limited resources, the state and federal governments continue to manage these resources alone, while many tribes desire to establish co-management systems. Although co-management does not exist (yet) tribes are able to submit fish and wildlife regulatory proposals to establish or change regulations that best serve tribal needs.

In Nenana, the State of Alaska is planning to lease agricultural land, which is adjacent to lands owned by our village corporation. The State has already financed and built a bridge across the river, providing year-round access to areas traditionally used by the tribe for hunting, fishing, and trapping. The availability of moose around the village is already under pressure from outside hunters and cow (female moose) hunts were recently reauthorized which is problematic for reproductivity and cultural hunting traditions (we do not support taking of cows unless for ceremony or survival). The tribe would like to write a regulatory proposal for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to reconsider the cow hunts as well as establish more stringent hunting guidelines in our game management unit, especially with the expected increase in hunters from the recent construction of the bridge. The tribe is open to other suggestions and policy recommendations as well.

### **Host Tribe #4**

#### **Santa Ana Pueblo**

##### **Strategic Planning for an Emerging Economy**

We would like assistance in considering where a tribal Section 17 corporation fits into the overall economic development portfolio of the Pueblo. We would like to reconsider the role of the corporation in a more strategic light, rather than its current position as holding company for gasoline stations and a car wash. In addition, we would like an evaluation of how economic development goals and initiatives intersect with our traditional Pueblo governing structure.

Relevant questions could include: What does one consider wealth accumulation in such a setting? What does one consider relevant measures of prosperity in such a setting? Are there policy measures that can be put in place to redirect wealth that might simply be accumulated towards greater prosperity? What kind of metrics would help us evaluate

these questions of wealth versus prosperity? Are there recognized measures for economic development success beyond employment rates and average income measures? Can these alternative metrics be tailored to the needs of a Pueblo that operates under a traditional government? Are there specific steps we should be taking now to help train the next generation of tribal citizens so they can better build and maintain a prosperous Pueblo? Can this training be differentiated for tribal leadership and tribal citizens that do not serve in a leadership capacity? Can it be brought to tribal citizens living away from the Pueblo? How do we leverage an ancient system of governance in a contemporary world in a way that will make us nimble for advancing an emerging economy? How does a tribal business get positioned to be a leader in technology and digital solutions? Why is it potentially more important to look at M&A versus starting businesses from scratch to grow tribal and regional economies? Finally, how do we identify businesses that are available for acquisition?

Part of this internship/fellowship will address our recent thinking about a new type of SWOT analysis that we are calling SOLAR (strengths, opportunities, liabilities, and results). SOLAR is an effort to move traditional SWOT analysis into a new framework where we pair traditional thinking about economic development drivers with computational tools and artificial intelligence to provide a solid analytical framework for strategic decision making moving forward.

**Host Tribe #5**  
**Southern Ute Indian Tribe**  
**Virtual Small Business Incubator**

Throughout the United States, Native American Tribes have the challenging job of providing equitable resources both to members that live on their reservations, and members that live elsewhere. At the same time, the advent of COVID-19 has driven demand for virtual services, and with it the opportunity to better serve all tribal members wherever they live. The Southern Ute Indian Tribe has recently established a small business program, which is now exploring the possibility of a Virtual Business Incubator for tribal members. We would like to create a business plan for a virtual program based on best practices nationwide, with a focus on building out mentoring, networking, and self-sufficiency using Native entrepreneurs, business owners, and resources to support the center. Further, we want the plan to include how to take advantage of the *Native American Business Incubator Act*. The plan should include recommendations for practices to adopt, key contacts, financing, and staffing requirements. Ideally, we could begin implementing the plan prior to the conclusion of the research project.

**Host Tribe #6**  
**National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association**  
**Indigenous Procurement Development**

NACCA, the National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association, is a membership-driven national association for a network of Aboriginal Financial Institutions, or AFIs. NACCA supports the AFI network, which offers financing to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit businesses and communities. NACCA is committed to the needs of AFIs and the Aboriginal businesses that they serve.

NACCA is seeking assistance to conduct research on the barriers and processes that limit Indigenous business participation in the Government of Canada's procurement supply chain. NACCA would like to collaborate with the Government of Canada to create a more favourable Indigenous procurement climate to accelerate the number of procurement contracts being issued to Indigenous businesses in Canada. Currently, the value and volume of Indigenous procurement contracts is believed to be less than 1% of contracts issued. The Government of Canada regularly procures more than \$20 billion per year in goods and services. A minimum 5% target would add \$1 billion to the Indigenous economy. Why is that Indigenous businesses do not pursue procurement contracts with Government of Canada? What can NACCA do to help increase procurement contracts going to Indigenous bidders?