

# TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP

## PART 1

JANUARY 16, 2024



California  
Interagency Council  
on Homelessness



# HOUSE KEEPING

- ◊ We are in webinar mode, so you can see us, but we can't see you.
- ◊ This is being recorded
- ◊ We will not have time for questions for Part 1; however, we will place resources in the chat where you can obtain additional information.
- ◊ During group discussion, please raise your hand or share your comments in the chat.

## **IN COMMUNICATIONS, PLEASE:**

- ◊ Share what is your experience only/your truth
- ◊ Avoid generalizations
- ◊ When commenting or chatting in discussion time, please speak from the heart
- ◊ Maintain a safe environment for both tribal and government partners to learn and share
- ◊ If you need individual agency consult, please contact Vevila Blossoming Bear, Cal ICH Tribal Liaison directly at [Vevila.blossoming@BCSH.Ca.Gov](mailto:Vevila.blossoming@BCSH.Ca.Gov)

# Introductions



## **Liz Hernandez, BSBA**

Member of the Northern Paiute  
Gidútikäd Band, Fort Bidwell;

Associate Tribal Technical Assistance Program Manager,  
California Coalition for Rural Housing;

Fort Bidwell Indian Community Tribal Council Member;

Liz has worked for her Tribe in multiple departments for over 8 years.



## **Iliana Chevez**

Taulepa Lenca Lineage;

Tribal Technical Assistance Program Manager,  
California Coalition for Rural Housing;

Iliana has over 10 years in community engagement and advocacy, program development, grant management, and data analysis in non-profit and tribal sectors.

# Introductions



## **Belinda Brown**

Kosealekte Band Member of the Ajumawi-Atsuge Nation (Pit River Tribe), Ms. Brown has a lifetime of experience elevating Indigenous knowledge and wisdom and the health of tribal communities.

She is honored to bring the voice of tribal communities to maintain their integrity as the first, best stewards of the land, ITEK into policies, procedures and protocols.



## **Vevila Blossoming Bear, MSW**

Descendant of the Choctaw Nation;

Tribal Liaison for the California Interagency Council on Homelessness  
Vevila has worked with, for, and on behalf of Tribes for over 20 years in tribal, government, and other contexts, including training government how to engage tribal and other communities, build culturally responsive programs/policies, and reduce disparities.





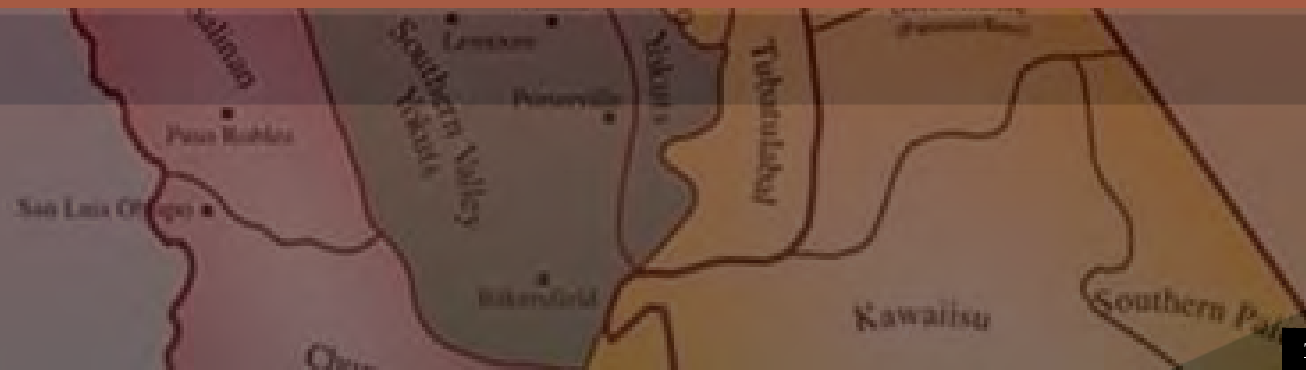
**BLESSING**



# PRE-CONTACT TRIBAL TERRITORIES

## Land Acknowledgement

With gratitude to all California Tribes



# AGENDA



Art by Hop Norris, Yurok

- Housekeeping
- Blessing
- Land acknowledgement
- Courageous conversations
- Why is learning about tribal engagement important?
- Key terminology
- Native Americans in California
- Land dispossession: a journey through land policies
- Native Americans, data and homelessness
- Implications



# COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS AND LEARNING

- Discomfort may happen when talking about California's history, inequities and challenges.
- This is okay
- "The cultures, structures and institutions we have created can only be re-imagined when we are moved in terms of our mindsets and emotions."
- These stories need to be told
- Please practice self care



Art by Bobby Von Martin, Choctaw, CA Resident



# WHY IS LEARNING ABOUT TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT?

CAL ICH encourages partnerships with Tribes and Urban Native Communities. This requires effective engagement.

Addressing the problem of homelessness in California means addressing it for everyone, including Native Americans.

Tribal Communities have unique needs that need to be understood before they can be effectively addressed.

Native Americans experience homelessness at higher rates than their Non-Native counterparts.

Effective partnership means skills in government-to-government tribal relationships.

Culturally responsive practice is key in a diverse society.

# Terminology

- “Native American”
- “Indigenous”
- “American Indian”
- Name of Tribal Nation of membership

# MORE TERMINOLOGY

**Reservation** – a land held in trust by the US government through treaty, legislation, or executive order and reserved for use by a tribe or tribal subdivision

**Rancheria** – small parcels of land that as originally intended to resettle homeless and landless tribal members after forcible removal; smaller than reservations

**Land allotment** – a portion, share, or division of land

**Trust land** – land held in trust by the US “for the benefit” of Native Americans.

# RACIAL VERSUS POLITICAL CLASSIFICATION

**Political classification** Allows for preferences not afforded to other underserved communities.

Native Americans, when enrolled, hold membership within their own Tribe and United States citizenship

**Government-to-government relationship**





# TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY



Art by Bobby Von Martin, Choctaw, CA Resident

- Right to establish one's own form of government, determine membership requirements, develop one's own policies, processes and systems of government.
- Tribal Sovereignty ensures that any decisions about Tribes with regard to their property and citizens are made with their participation and consent, or consultation.





# CALIFORNIA (CA)

- 110 Federally Recognized Tribes
- 81 Tribes petitioning for federal recognition
- **At least 1,409,609 Native Americans in CA  
(including Alaska Natives)  
3.6% of population**
- The majority reside off tribal land, including county/city jurisdictions
- California includes CA Tribal Members & a large out-of-state Native American population

# GOVERNMENT - TRIBAL RELATIONS

DOCTRINE OF  
DISCOVERY –  
JUSTIFICATION  
FOR CHRISTIAN  
MONARCHS TO  
COLONIZE THE  
WORLD

GENOCIDE – COMMITTING THE  
FOLLOWING ACTS TO DESTROY A  
GROUP:  
KILLING,  
CAUSING SERIOUS BODILY OR  
MENTAL HARM;  
INFLECTING GROUP CONDITIONS  
CALCULATED TO BRING  
DESTRUCTION;  
IMPOSING MEASURES INTENDED TO  
PREVENT BIRTHS;  
FORCIBLY TRANSFERRING (OR  
KIDNAPPING) CHILDREN TO  
ANOTHER GROUP.





# Dispossession of land

**Native Americans have lost 98.9% of the lands they once occupied**

**“We have a sacred obligation to take care of our land, and we cannot fulfill that obligation.”**

**Dr. Maria Braveheart**



## 1851-1892 Unratified Treaties

NEGOTIATED OR “FORCED” TREATIES  
MOVED TO CA NATIVES TO LAND  
OUTSIDE OF THE GOLD RUSH AREA.  
THESE WERE HIDDEN AND NEVER  
RATIFIED.

THE TRIBES WERE NEVER TOLD.

**ALL TRIBES BECAME LANDLESS.**

## 1853: Beginning of Reservation System in California

CONGRESS APPROPRIATED \$250K TO  
ESTABLISH FOUR RESERVATIONS IN  
CA.



**FOR  
CALIFORNIA!  
DIRECT**

**EXTRAORDINARY INDUCEMENTS!!  
THIRTY-FIVE DAYS TO THE GOLD REGIONS!**

**The "California Steam Navigation Co."**  
Will dispatch their first vessel from New-York, the NEW and SPLENDID

**STEAM SHIP!**

**NICARAGUA**

DAVID JERHOLD, Master, positively  
**On FRIDAY, MARCH 23d, 1849,**  
Via the River St. Juan and Lake Nicaragua, across the Isthmus of Panama.

Capt. BRUNSON, of the U. S. Topographical Engineers,  
**200 JACK ASSES!**

**The Quickest, Safest and Cheapest!!**  
**Price of Passage Through Ninety Dollars!**  
To be paid in THREE, THREE and half Dollars, before sailing.

For further particulars apply on board, at the feet of South Street, N. Y., or to the undersigned Agents for the Company. Applications by mail, in most situations, must be post paid, addressed to the Company's Agents,  
HOONAY, BROTHERS & Co., 147 Wall Street, (opposite the Railroad.)

# 1855 California Gold Rush

Two thirds of the Native population was killed in the first two years of the gold rush.

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## 1864 FOUR RESERVATIONS ACT

AUTHORIZED THE  
HOOPA VALLEY &  
TULE RIVER  
RESERVATIONS AND  
ESTABLISHED THE  
ROUND VALLEY  
RESERVATION.  
ONLY LANDS  
SECURED  
FOR NATIVE  
OCCUPATION IN THE  
STATE.



Art by Lorenzo Antonio Rodriguez,  
Mescalero/Tarahumara, CA resident





## 1887 General Allotment (Dawes) Act

- Land divided up into plots and allocated to individual Native Americans
- Left over land was sold to the Euro-American settlers
- Promised US citizenship to Natives who took advantage of the policy and “adopted the habits of civilized life.”
- **Resulted in 100,000 landless Native Americans.**



# 1905 INDIAN AFFAIRS INVESTIGATION & REPORT ORDERED BY CONGRESS

## THE 1906 REPORT FOUND:

“If they succeeded in making the land productive, they faced eviction by nearby non-Indian landowners.”

Most Indians are found in “.. waste places not having enough value to attract anyone else.”

“lack of water” & “worthlessness of soil”

The decrease in the Native population was attributed to the “lack of a secure Indian land base.”

Recommendations for the improvement of Southern California reservations.

Immediate relief for the homeless Northern California Natives was recommended.

# 1906 REPORT APPROVED BY THE COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

CONGRESS APPROPRIATED \$100K  
ALMOST ANNUALLY UNTIL 1933

## 1934 INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT

LAND ACQUISITION PROGRAM  
STABILIZED TRUST LAND  
HOLDINGS AUTHORITY TO THE  
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO  
ACQUIRE LAND PURCHASE OF 82  
RANCHERIAS

**MOST “UNINHABITABLE”**



Art by Lorenzo Antonio Rodriguez,  
Mescalero/Tarahumara,  
CA resident

# 1928

## California Tribal plaintiffs permitted to sue California over unratified treaties



- Cases lasted from 1928-1963
- All California Natives were treated as one Tribe in the case
  - ◊ All members were listed on one roll
  - ◊ All Natives living in CA on July 1, 1852, and their descendants
- Second related case in 1946
  - Requested Compensation for land ceded in the unratified treaties
  - Second roll established 36,095 California Native names from 1950- 1955

**Settlement:** presumed that all Natives of California, given the choice, would have chosen treaty-making to out-right annihilation.

**Second Case Settlement:**  
**Some claims for settlement are still outstanding**



# The Era of Termination

1953-1962

TERMINATION BECOMES OFFICIAL POLICY

CONGRESS DISBANDED TRIBES AND SOLD THEIR LANDS

**OVER 100 BANDS, COMMUNITIES, AND RANCHERIAS IN CA  
ARE TERMINATED OR LOSE FEDERAL PROTECTIONS AND  
SERVICES (VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, MEDICAL, WATER,  
SANITATION)**

NATIVE AMERICAN ACTIVISM HELPED INSPIRE THE END TO  
THIS ERA IN 1962

*“Nothing else that Congress can do causes tribal members to lose more of their rights than termination. Termination is the ultimate weapon of Congress and ultimate fear of tribes. Despite its drastic effect, the Supreme Court has held that Congress has the power under the Commerce Clause to terminate a Tribe.”*

Stephen Pevar, Author of *The Rights of Indians & Tribes* &  
ACLU Senior Counsel



## 1956 RELOCATION ACT (ADULT VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM)

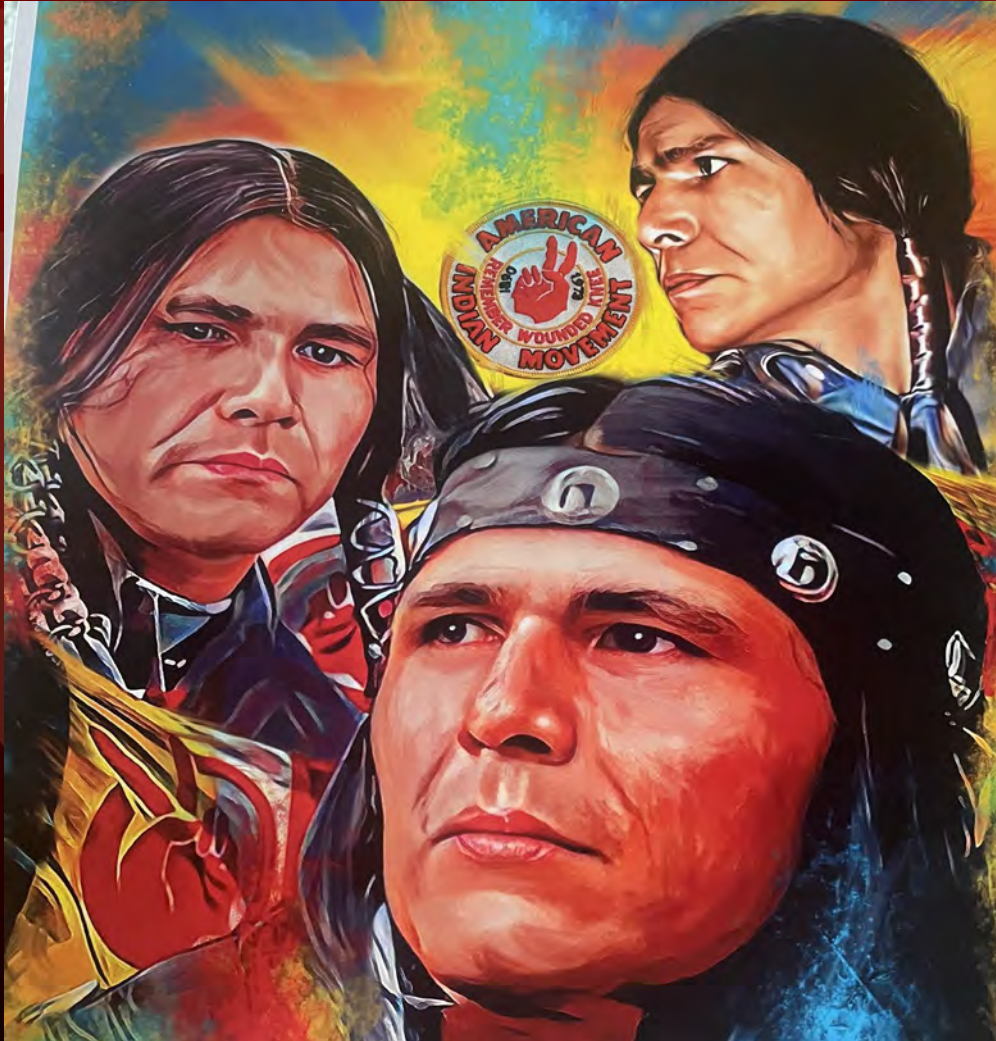
- PROMISED MOVING EXPENSES, ASSISTANCE LOCATING HOUSING, VOCATIONAL TRAINING & HEALTH INSURANCE
- CANNOT RETURN TO DISSOLVED RESERVATIONS
- MORE THAN 200K NATIVE MOVED FROM HOMELANDS TO CITIES SUCH AS SAN FRANCISCO, LOS ANGELES, SAN JOSE

**RESULTED IN LOSS OF TRADITIONAL FAMILIAL SUPPORTS, ISOLATION, HOMELESSNESS, UNEMPLOYMENT/LOW WAGE JOBS, AND POVERTY**



Art by Bobby Von Martin, Choctaw, CA resident

## 1970S TO TODAY: SELF DETERMINATION



NATIVE AMERICAN ACTIVISM ELEVATED THEIR CAUSES AND TRIBES GAINED MORE PUBLIC SUPPORT.

\* TRIBAL SELF GOVERNANCE ACT OF 1994

\* THE NATIVE AMERICAN HOUSING ASSISTANCE & SELF-DETERMINATION ACT (NAHASDA) OF 1996

GRANTED TRIBES THE AUTHORITY TO DETERMINE THE HOUSING PROGRAMS THEY WILL FUND, THE INDIVIDUALS SERVED, AND THE DELIVERY METHOD OF PROGRAMS.

REQUIRED THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO CONSULT WITH TRIBES

OFFICE OF NATIVE AMERICAN PROGRAMS

**WHILE HELPFUL, TRIBES REPORT FUNDING LEVELS INSUFFICIENT TO MEET NEEDS OF MOST TRIBES**



# STATE OF CALIFORNIA HOUSING/HOMELESSNESS PROGRAMS TODAY

**2019:** THE RURAL COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE CORPORATION (RCAC) & THE CALIFORNIA COALITION OF RURAL HOUSING CONDUCT A NEEDS ASSESSMENT; RECOMMENDED MORE RESOURCES TO TRIBES.

**2019:** AB1010 & INCREASE IN TRIBAL SET ASIDE FUNDS; HOWEVER, FEW TRIBES CAN ACCESS FUNDING STREAMS THAT REQUIRE TRIBES TO BE LIKE COUNTIES.

**2022:** CALIFORNIA INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESS'S TRIBAL HOMELESS HOUSING ASSISTANCE & PREVENTION PROGRAM (TRIBAL HHAP): FIRST STATE HOUSING PROGRAM DEVELOPED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TRIBES. (\$20 MILLION FOR 110 TRIBES);  
OTHER STATE SET-ASIDES FOR TRIBES ARE IN BEGINNING STAGES.

**2022 - 2023:** TRIBAL LEADERS MOBILIZING FOR A NEW STATE TRIBAL HOUSING PROGRAM "BY TRIBES, FOR TRIBES" THAT PROVIDES ADDITIONAL FUNDING AND EFFECTIVELY MEETS THEIR NEEDS.



# CALIFORNIA –TRIBAL RELATIONS TODAY

## 2022 AB 923 Tribal Consultation

- Mandated tribal consultation in all state agencies
- Mandatory training for state agencies on government-to-government relationship

## California Truth & Healing Council

Elevates Native American narratives about tribal – government history and clarifies the historical record in the spirit of truth & healing.

**This work will culminate in a report with recommendations for restoration and reparation.**

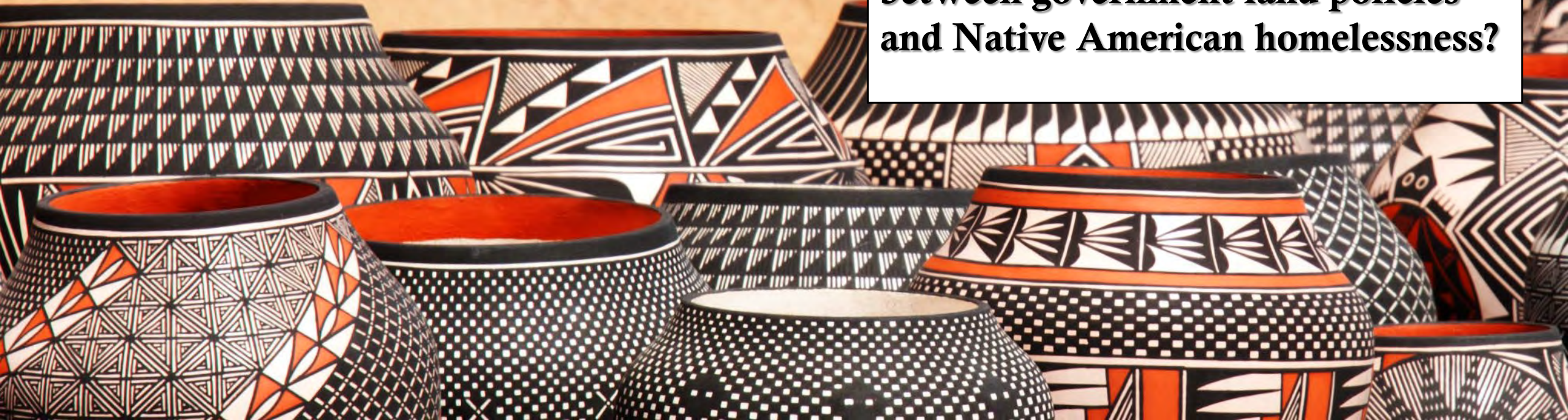




# Discussion

**What trends are you noticing in the history of government policies for Tribes?**

**What connections have you noticed between government land policies and Native American homelessness?**







After hundreds of years of policies that have disenfranchised native Americans, we know this:

**We must partner with Tribes and urban Native Communities to truly understand their needs in addressing homelessness.**



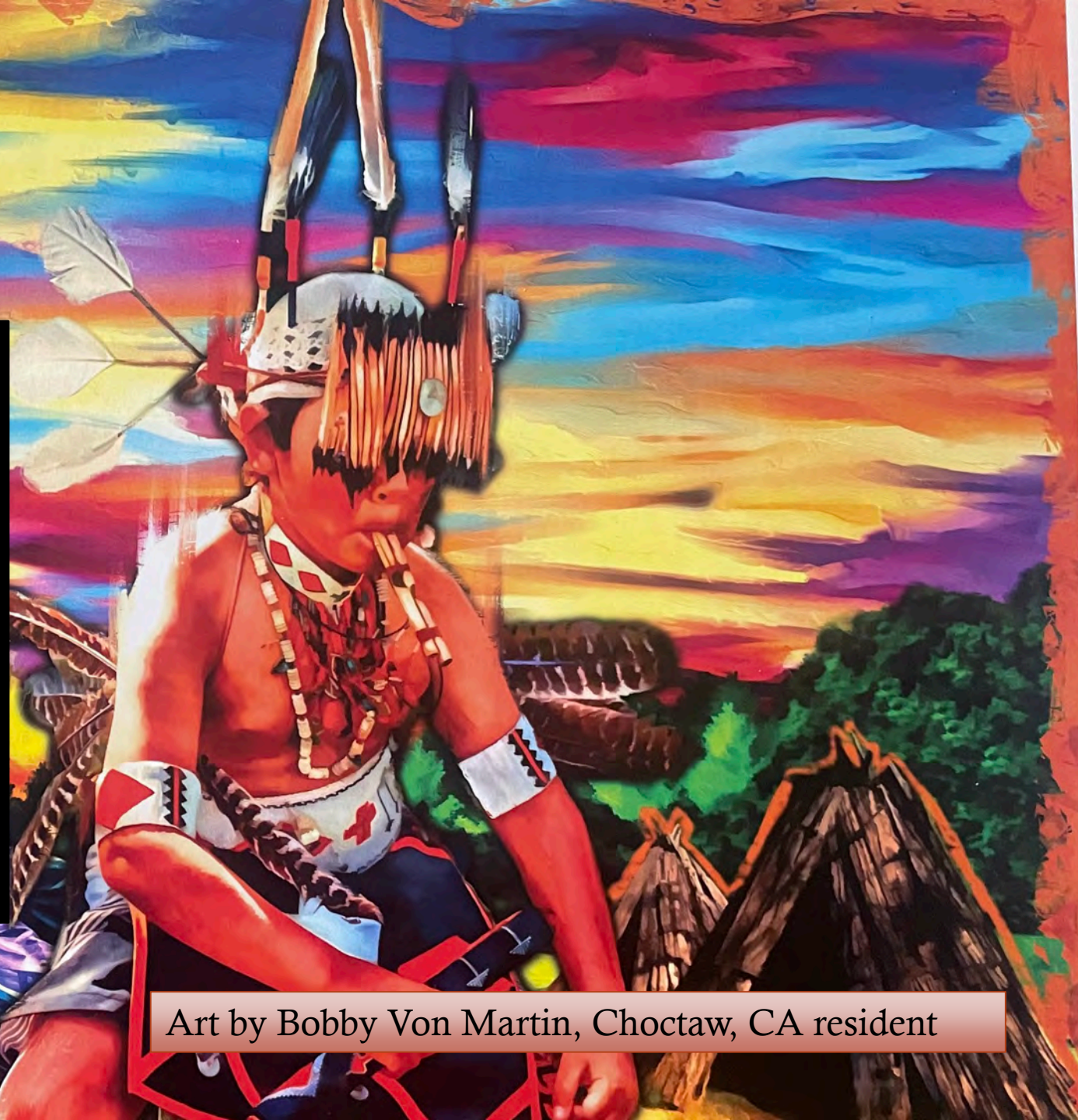
## CALIFORNIA NATIVE COMMUNITIES TODAY

**“Modern Indigenous Nations and communities are societies formed by their resistance to colonialism, through which they have carried their practices and histories. It is breathtaking, but no miracle, that they have survived as peoples.”**

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

Author of the *Indigenous History of the United States*

Art by Bobby Von Martin, Choctaw, CA resident



# CURRENT CHALLENGES

- *Insufficient federal & state funding*
- **Barriers Building On & Off Tribal Land**
- Tribes often face isolated locations, poor infrastructure (road, water, and sewer systems, weak local economies, limited institutional capacities, racism and a complex legal environment restricting the use of tribal land.
- Many tribal communities lack a developed housing and lending market.
- Non-Native businesses often will not work with Tribes.
- **Lack of Accessible State and Funding Resources for Tribes**
- Government programs typically are not designed with or for Tribes and are inaccessible.
- Tribal members often do not seek services outside of the Tribe.
- **Inaccurate homelessness data / not included in data**
- **Lack of effective & respectful engagement with Tribes/Cultural Misunderstandings**



# NATIVE AMERICAN CHARACTERISTICS IN HOMELESSNESS

Dominant culture vs. Native American culture

- Availability of extended family members who can lend a helping hand & resources

Cultural nuances that contribute to homelessness

Universal trauma and often substance use disorders/disparities in all poor health outcomes

Includes Individuals of all ages

Many who have a substance use disorder will be unlikely to accept a home if they cannot use substances there

Native Americans often live in overcrowded/physically inadequate homes.

Source :  
2019 RCAC  
Needs  
Assessment

Racism contributes to poverty and isolation, and it also hinders access to resources

Higher poverty rates than others



# NATIVE AMERICAN HOMELESSNESS AND DATA / DISPARITIES

Native Americans are at least 5X more likely to experience homelessness than the general population

**Tribes are rarely engaged nor included in the development of data measures and solutions.**

No sources of accurate data on the problem of Native American homelessness.

- ◇ Examples of accurate data collection issues:
  - ◇ Survey design issues
    - ◇ Up to 75% of data on Natives are lost with the “mixed race” category; choosing only 1 category for mixed individuals is also problematic.
  - ◇ Survey methods don’t engage Native Americans
  - ◇ Distrust of those surveying
  - ◇ Varied definitions of homelessness

# THANK YOU

See you on January 23, 2024, for  
TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT TOOLS!

For questions, please contact Vevila Blossoming Bear,  
Cal ICH Tribal Liaison at (916) 510-9445

*Special thanks to the Native American artists who shared their art for  
this presentation.*

