

Utteaka Nau Naawak

Togetherness Strong Roots
4th Annual Report





The Pascua Yaqui Tribal Council is an elected body that serves a four year term. The current Council took Office in June 2020. The Council selects four of its members to serve in Executive roles that include a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. Councilmembers also serve on various government operations through face-to-face, regularly scheduled meetings with Division/Department Directors and key staff.

TRIBAL COUNCIL 2020-2024

Peter Yucupicio, **Chairman**

Antonia Campoy, **Councilmember**

Robert Valencia, **Vice Chairman**

Herminia Frias, **Councilmember**

Sergio Varela, **Treasurer**

Andrea Gonzales, **Councilmember**

Francisco R. Valencia, **Secretary**

Angelina Matus, **Councilmember**

Catalina Alvarez, **Councilmember**

Francisco Munoz Jr., **Councilmember**

Mary Jane Buenamea, **Councilmember**



HISTORY OF THE PASCUA YAQUI TRIBE

BACKGROUND

The Yaqui people have inhabited many parts of North America, from northern Mexico and the southern United States from Arizona, west to California and north to Colorado since 500 AD. The Yaquis' main territorial base is located along the Rio Yaqui in Sonora, Mexico and consists of eight original pueblos: Benem, Huiviris, Rahum, Potam, Vicam, Torim, Bacum, and Cocorit. The name Yaqui was given to the "Yoeme" (the Yaqui word for "People"), by the Spanish who called the Yoeme Haiki (Yaqui), which is the Yoeme word for "speech."

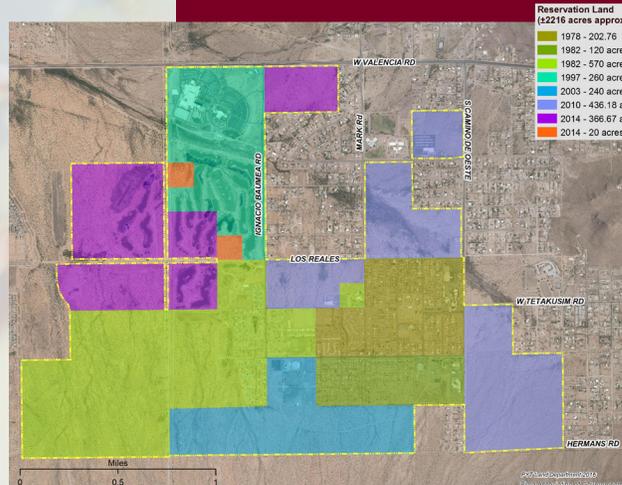
Historically, the Yoeme resided in six main Yaqui communities: (1) Guadalupe, near Phoenix; (2) old Pascua Village, in downtown Tucson; (3) Pascua Yaqui Pueblo, which is the Yaqui Reservation outside of Tucson; (4) Barrio Libre, in the City of South Tucson; (5) Yoeme Pueblo, in Marana; and (6) Penjamo in Scottsdale. These six communities, in addition to others in Coolidge, Scottsdale, and elsewhere, continue today.

In 1964, a bill was passed for the transfer of two hundred and two acres of desert land to the Yoeme where they could maintain their tribal identity. Many Yoeme moved to this new land, now the Pascua Yaqui Reservation, located seven miles west of I-19, south of Valencia Road. The Pascua Yaqui Tribe gained federal recognition as an Indian Tribe on September 18, 1978 and passed its first Constitution in 1988. On October 14, 1994, Congress adopted Public Law 103-357, recognizing the Pascua Yaqui Tribe as a "Historic Indian Tribe," possessing all sovereign rights of an Indian Tribe.

The tribal and federal governments provide health, education, social services, vocational training, and housing services to tribal members. Additionally, the reservation community is provided public safety services. Annual celebrations include Tribal Recognition Day on September 18 and the Easter ceremonies, which start each year on Ash Wednesday and continue through the Lenten Season.



PASCUA YAQUI RESERVATION
Approximately 2,216 acres
Last updated June 2016





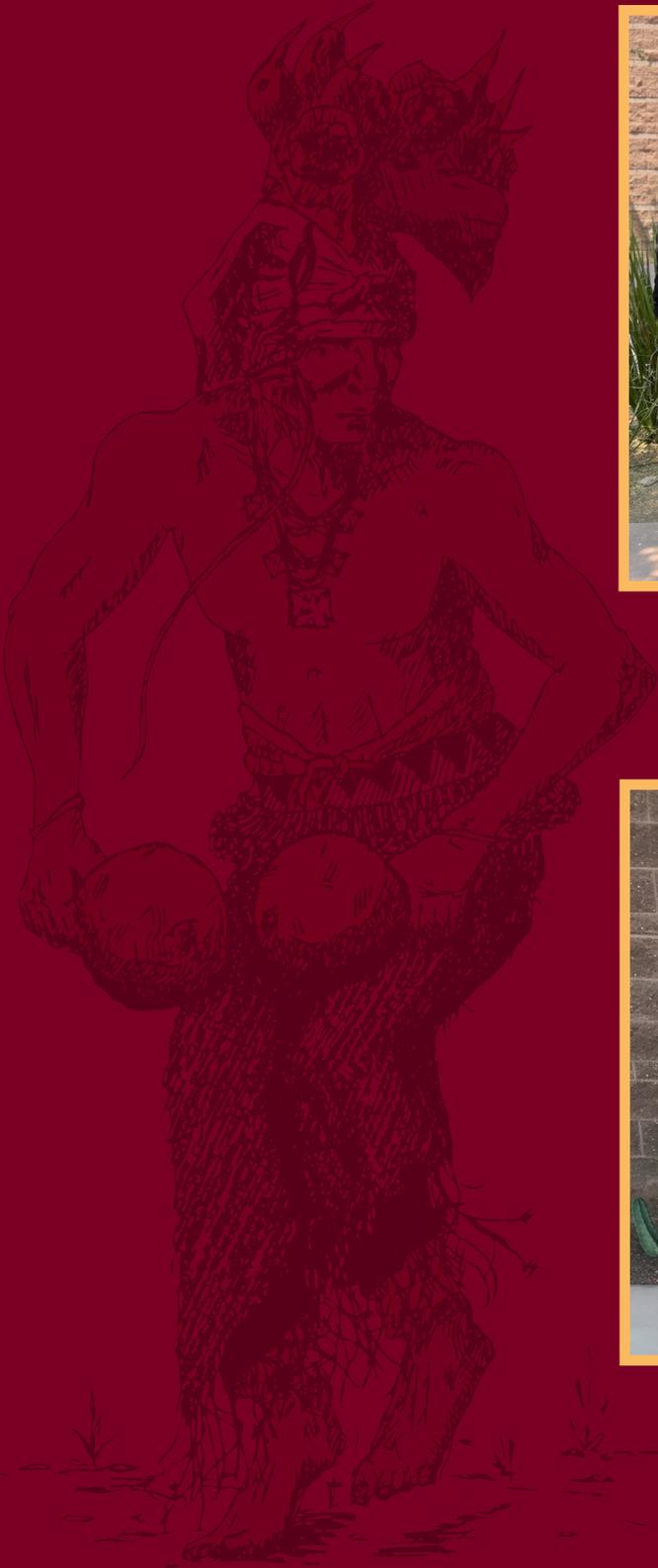
ICWA MISSION STATEMENT

The Pascua Yaqui Tribe recognizes that our Yaqui children are our future. Together in genuine partnership with families, our community, and other governmental agencies we strive to provide support for children and families in reaching their full potential. Our vision is to strengthen families and promote the well-being of our children through prevention, intervention, education and advocacy.

Hiak Pahkua Motchaala Nau Ho'arakame, Itom yoemia taa hu'uneiya. Ito vetchi'ivo am haptia nokitune'epo into nau nana'anapo siimem nau welisia, Itom vatoraata. Yaura vetana hoara'apo itom utte'amak hunaman yeu toha'u waka hiapsamta tu'l vatoita itom yoemiam vetana. Navuhti vicha au suawamta into waka vem emo mahtatevone'epo waa hinamiamake.

La Tribu Pascua Yaqui reconoce que nuestros niños son nuestro futuro. Existe una colaboración única entre familias, nuestra comunidad y entre otras agencias gubernamentales, y juntos hacemos el esfuerzo de proveer el apoyo para los niños y familias en realizar su potencial. Nuestra visión es de fortalecer las familias y promover el bien estar de nuestros niños a través de prevención, intervención, educación, y abogacía.

ICWA
STAFF



PIMA COUNTY

Left to Right: Marissa Quiroz, Norena Valencia, Tony Sanchez, Christopher Molina Jr., Tamara Walters, Brenda Urbina



MARICOPA COUNTY

Left to Right: Tara Hubbard, Selena Gortariz, Kanani Anderson, Frances Amedee



PERSONAL STORIES

CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE OR AGED OUT

M.D, 17 years old

Do you remember being removed from your home? If so, what age?

Yes, I was removed multiple times but the first time I was 6 years old.

Do you think being placed with family was important?

Yes of course, its hard being a little kid being place somewhere you do not know so being with family makes us comfortable.

Do you remember your caseworker?

Yes, Tony Sanchez

How do you think the system can be improved?

I think honestly just by communication. Better communication will help the improvement.

Do you think the system worked the way it should've?

In the beginning yes it worked out perfectly fine, we were reunified with my mom, but then other things happened, and we got removed again but then everything went bad when my mom was passing away and I couldn't say my last goodbye.

Did you get all the services you needed during the time you were in the system?

Yes I received all the services I needed during this time besides the fact that they could never find a placement for me so I had to remain in Juvenile.

Did anyone teach you about the culture while you were in the system?

Yeah they gave me resources and opportunities I need to learn the culture.

M.M, 24 years old

Do you remember being removed from your home? If so, what age?

Yes, in 2001.

Do you remember where you were initially placed?

Yes, my tia

Were you involved in the culture?

Uhm, there was a time I was, then there was a time I was not. Growing in the system I was placed in a lot of different homes, so I got raised with different cultures.

Do you remember your caseworker?

Yes, Gabriel Lopez was my caseworker until I was 18 years old.

M.M Continued...

Do you think the system worked the way it should've?

No because I was placed in a group home because nobody wanted me, I aged out there.

How does it impact you today?

It is a lot, I have been in the system since 2001, the only person that help me become the woman I am today is Gabriel Lopez. He always came to check on me, when my mother passed away, he dropped everything to pick me up. He showed me that someone cared about me, he inspired me that I can be something more in life.

A.M, 12 years old

Do you remember being removed from your home? If so, what age?

Kind of, I was 3

Do you remember where you were initially placed?

No

Do you think being placed with family was important?

Yes

Do you remember your caseworker?

Yes, Tony Sanchez

How do you think the system can be improved?

No, going through what we did I thought you guys were really good.

V.U, 13 years old

Do you remember being removed from your home?

If so, what age? Partially, I was about 4-5 years old.

Do you think being placed with family was important?

Yes I think so now, but at the time I didn't know them because they were my immediate family.

Do you remember your caseworker?

Yes, Tony Sanchez

Do you think the system worked the way it should've?

Yes, because we ended up in a family where we were safe and loved. I want to thank you guys for removing me from the situation I was in because I know today, I wouldn't have been the same person I am, I probably would've been in a worst situation so I am thankful!

PERSONAL STORIES

FOSTER PARENTS

Rosa Soto Alvarez, Foster Parent



Are you a tribal member? If so, what tribe?

Yes, Pascua Yaqui Tribe

How long have been a foster parent?

About 19 years, since 2002

In your experience how does or did ICWA work for you? *My personal case I grew an ICWA kid placed with a Yaqui family that were not blood related, but I was placed back with my community because of the law. As a foster parent through ICWA for my nephews when they were taken through the state, and they were placed with me and back with tribe and their community.*

How did you get notice to be a placement?

One time a parent come to my house and asked me if I would foster her children. I knew she was having a hard time, so we made that happen. I took in 4 of her kids. Other than that, I just get a phone call from Social Services.

Maria Paisano, Foster Parent



Are you a tribal member? If so, what tribe?

Yes, Pascua Yaqui Tribe

How long have been a foster parent?

15 years

Are you licensed with our Tribe?

Yes

Did you notice an effect on the child(ren) while being with family or not being with family?

Yes because I was able to make them comfortable by showing them pictures of their mom when she was little. I was also able to show them pictures of different family members and shared many family stories.

What has been the outcome in your past cases? *Guardianship and I did a lot of respite over the years.*

Tony Sanchez, ICWA Case Manager & Foster Parent



Are you a tribal member? If so, what tribe?

Yes, Pascua Yaqui Tribe.

Are you related to the foster child(ren) in your care?

Yes, I am a kinship placement.

Did you notice an effect on the child(ren) while being with family or not being with family?

Recently, a child was placed in a group home in Phoenix which made it harder for family to visit and for the child to be connected to the tribe and extended family in Tucson. Placement with extended family is better because of the connection they can keep with the community and tribal ceremonies. Getting to have frequent visit with families versus not being with family is beneficial for these children.

Brenda Urbina, ICWA Case Manager & Foster Parent



Are you a tribal member? If so, what tribe?

Yes, Pascua Yaqui Tribe

How long have been a foster parent?

3 years

In your experience how does or did ICWA work for you?

ICWA has worked very well for me. My late husband and I took in children that he was related to. When he passed away there was nobody to take care of them and I did not want to send them back to the system so I cared for them. I called Tamara right away and she gave me everything I needed to keep the children in my care. Their biological mom had a new baby, that I also took in, but they were reunified last year.

Was it better for the child(ren) to have a permanency option?

Yes, a lot better because if they do not have permanency, they worry on what's going to happen to them, especially when they turn 18 where are they going to go. They get nervous, they stress, and they get scared. So, permanency is important.

PERSONAL STORIES

PEOPLE WHO MAKE ICWA SUCCESSFUL

**Sheri Freemont,
Casey Family Programs,
Indian Child Welfare Program**



What are your thoughts about our PYT ICWA Program and our attorneys and caseworkers?
Pascua Yaqui Tribe has been the model of what I wish all tribes could do to support their tribal children and families who are in the State child welfare systems. I have worked with state courts and tribes around the country, and I know that the way Pascua Yaqui commits resources and staff to support the families shines as a model. The committed attorneys who not only are well-versed in the law but also create relationships with other stakeholders is key. The caseworkers have put their heart and culture into the cases and helped all those who take part in these cases understand Yaqui values and healing.

Any example of where you can say the Tribe has done very well?

Pascua Yaqui is dedicated to supporting the law and the practices of ICWA. The tribe makes efforts to tell the need to ICWA to state and federal stakeholders and offers free and effective training to those who use ICWA. This is critical for the people who serve tribal families all over the country.

**Scott McDonald,
Arizona Superior Court Judge, Pima County**



What are your thoughts about our PYT ICWA Program and our attorneys and caseworkers?
It is a wonderful team, I have been amazed with the services provided and offered by the tribe, it is very impressive to me how case workers and the parents work together.

Overtime, as our program made you comfortable in approving placement and/or transfer to tribal court?

Absolutely!

In your opinion, how well do you think the tribe has helped the child(ren) while being in the system?

I think they have done an outstanding job for their community, in terms of helping their children. I am blown away with the number of services the tribe offers the parents both before and after dependency.

Any example of where you can say the Tribe has done very well?

Getting an ICWA Compliant Placement right away and offering services through the tribe has made parents a lot more comfortable in engaging.

**Tony Sanchez,
ICWA Case Manager & Foster Parent**



What are your thoughts about our PYT ICWA Program and our attorneys and caseworkers?
As an ICWA worker and the attorneys for the tribe my thoughts are that we are in a better position now as previous years it was very hard for us to communicate with the state because they did not know our ICWA process. We have improved so much over the years, providing those skills as an ICWA worker, and teaching our attorneys the scope of our culture and traditions they learn and that they can really advocate for our tribal members and children.

What is your experience between handling State and/or Tribal Cases?

The state cases are represented through the tribe by attorneys, parents, and children attorneys, DCS has its own attorney as well, the difference is when case is transfer we do not have those services to be represented by attorneys and makes it complicated, the big difference is having to throw our more services and more responsibility when transferring it over.

PERSONAL STORIES TRIBAL COUNCIL PERSPECTIVE

**Francisco Guadalupe Munoz,
Tribal Council Member**



How long have you been a tribal councilmember?

5th Term

Why do you think ICWA is Important?

It is important because it keeps the tribal kids in a home with family and helps them keep their identity.

How important is it to keep our youth culturally connected?

Very important because that's part of their identity and who are you are. So they need to be involved on where they belong.

**Catalina Alvarez,
Tribal Councilwoman**



How long have you been a tribal councilmember?

4th term, had a break 2016-2020

Why do you think ICWA is Important?

Keeps the children in our culture, ceremonies and their identity. I am from Maricopa County and a lot of children are sent out to homes and lose that identity and its very hard for them when they try to come back into the community.

Why is tribal sovereignty important?

We need to exercise our sovereignty to be able to do what we need to do for our people. We can enforce laws that make us unique and that will help our people and keep our culture.

**Herminia Frias,
Tribal Council Member**



How long have you been a tribal councilmember?

2nd consecutive term, but I was on Council in 2004

Why do you think ICWA is Important?

It is important that we keep our children and do not lose our children to the system. I consider our tribe a family and every child that is Yaqui belongs in our family. ICWA protects our children and makes sure that we don't lose them.

Does ICWA work for our Tribe? If so, in your opinion why and how?

Yes, it does work for our tribe, I've seen a lot of cases where our children were taken away and our Tribal Attorneys have stepped in and have protected our children from being adopted out to non-tribal families and did their best to keep them in our tribe and communities

**Andrea Gonzales,
Tribal Council Member**



How long have you been a tribal councilmember?

This is my first term.

Have you had any experience with ICWA?

Yes, I have been a foster parent since 2012. A had family members in a situation. They approached me and asked for help. I became a long term kinship placement.

Why do you think ICWA is Important?

ICWA is so very important because it keeps our Yaqui children connected with their culture, communities, and their families.



OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL ICWA STATUS REPORT DATA



**Tamara Walters,
ICWA Assistant
Attorney General**

What are your thoughts about our PYT ICWA Program and our attorneys and caseworkers?

Well, I think we have the best program in the whole United States. We have a strong program. We are very dedicated to our families and the tribal community. We have excellent case workers, paralegals, and attorneys that work together as a team to make sure families get services and strive for reunification.

Is it helpful to know our tribe and what we do for our children?

Yes, because you should know the child rearing practices, the family dynamics, cultural engagement and ceremonies and family connections to properly represent the families and the Tribe.

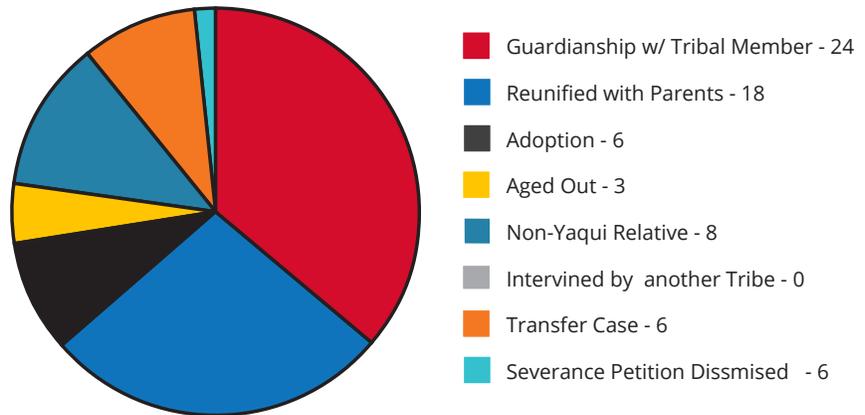
Any example of where you can say the Tribe has done very well?

We show up and intervene in every single ICWA Case whether it be in Arizona or out of state and participate fully.

How well do you think the tribe works with Mental Health Issues?

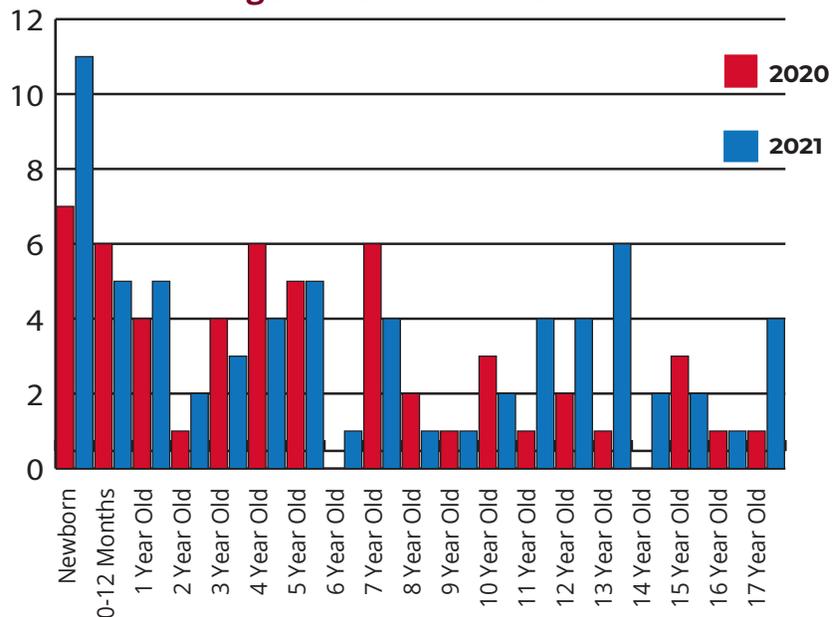
I think very well, training and education is important! We have a great centered spirit program and counseling.

Outcomes 2019-2020



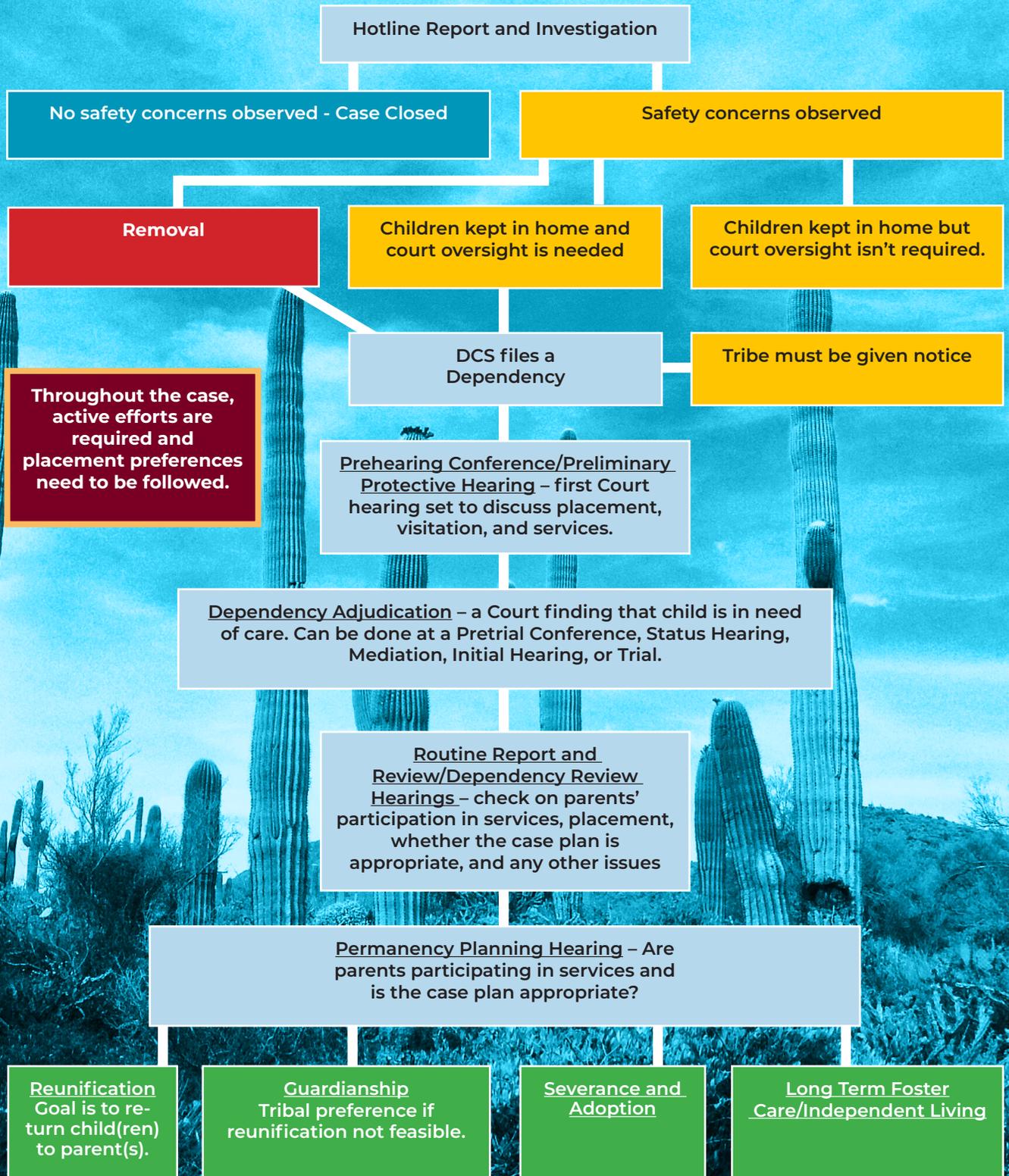
An evaluation of monthly case data between March 2021 through March 2021 shows that there were 74 dependency cases opened in both Maricopa and Pima County. Additionally, there were 34 dependency cases closed in both Maricopa and Pima county. In that same time period the ICWA team recieved 406 notices for eligibility determination. Moreover, there were 732 children in total that were addressed that either (1) enrolled, (2) eligible for enrollment, or (3) non-member/not enrolled. the ideal case plan resolution is reunification with a parent. If reunification is not likely, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe has preference for guadianship over severance and adoption. The data shows 36% of ICWA cases resulted in reunification with parent(s).

Age at Removal 2019-2020



Newborn* 0-30 days

DEPENDENCY PROCESS IN ARIZONA STATE COURTS



HAPPY RETIREMENT **TAMARA WALTERS**



Tamara Walters has been the Pascua Yaqui Tribe's ICWA Assistant Attorney General for the last 20 years. Ms. Walters has had a huge impact on the tribe, the attorney general's office and in state courts. Since 2000 until now, Tamara has open 1,894 ICWA Cases and closed 1,602 cases. 688 of those open cases have ended in reunification with their parents. Not only has she made the impact in Pima County but she also has successfully been involved in the impact that was made in Maricopa County to help our Yaqui Children. Over the years Tamara has not only dedicated herself to all of the tribe's ICWA cases, but also, she has help build today's Pima County ICWA Court. On behalf of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe and The Office of the Attorney General, Tamara will be truly missed by all, she is truly deserving of every positive thing that comes her way. Happy Retirement!

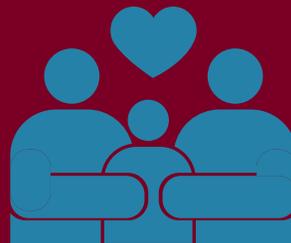
A FAREWELL FROM COLLEAGUES

Tamara, I met you years ago in 2008, when I joined the Tribe. You told me jokingly, "Don't put anything on your walls, because you never know..." Years later, we are a bit older and wiser, (and slower) and still here. Professionally, we all owe you a debt of gratitude for helping to save and reunify our tribal families, years before other tribes started to appear in state court on ICWA cases. Your work and dedication is appreciated and has likely been one of the most important investments the tribe made over the years. Our relationship with you is a familial relationship. You are family to this department and to the Tribe. One of us. It has been an honor. On a personal note. You helped my family and we are in a better place because of your advocacy. Thank you ~Alfred Urbina, Attorney General

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS 2000-2021



1,894 Open Cases



688 Reunifications



1,602 CLOSED CASES

HAPPY RETIREMENT TAMARA WALTERS

Tamara, I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to work closely with you these past five years. You have been a tremendous source of knowledge and a good friend. I wish you the very best retirement - you deserve to rest! While I am sad that you won't be working side by side with me anymore, I know this is not goodbye since we will keep in touch.

-Tara H.

Thank you for all your hard work throughout the years at the office! You always made sure to come in with a big smile ready to brighten the day. I hope you have a wonderful retirement! I will miss our laughs about how your electronics always magically stop working and need to be fixed

Thank you Ms. Tamara

-Chris Molina Jr.

It was an incredible honor to have worked with you over the years, Tamara. I will miss your wonderful smile and laughter and great conversations. This place will not be the same without you. Best wishes to you for a wonderful, relaxing and happy retirement! You certainly earned it!

-Wenona Baldenegro

Tamara, I can't thank you enough for all your hard work you have done over the years and how great you have been to us! You are amazing! I will miss our lunches and our conversations; you deserve every minute of relaxation & fun during your retirement. Best wishes, Happy Retirement!

-Marissa Quiroz

Tamara, congratulations on your retirement from many years of dedication to the Pascua Yaqui Tribe and in your role as the ICWA Assistant Attorney General. You leave behind a legacy of determination and advocacy for our Yaqui children, as a defender of their rights through the Indian Child Welfare Act. You have dedicated tireless years to ICWA and I am so proud to call you a colleague and especially a close friend. I will definitely miss you my friend and your bubbly personality, and I wish you all the best in this well-deserved retirement, nothing you did will go unnoticed since you made such an impact on so many lives within the Office of the Attorney General and Pascua Yaqui Tribe.

-Naomi Mendoza

It has been wonderful to be your colleague here at the Attorney General's Office and to witness your unlimited positive attitude, your dedication, and your professionalism. I wish you the best in your well-deserved retirement! Enjoy this new chapter in your life!

-Vince Rabago

Congratulations on your retirement! Tamara you have been a great asset for the tribe! Thank you for your dedication and hard work with our families! You will be missed!

-Selena Gortaiz

It has been a joy to work with someone so passionate, calm, positive and a professional and let us not forget a beautiful lady all at the same time. You have made such a difference with your constant optimism, enthusiasm. Your dedication to our Tribal Children has made a big impact to The Pascua Yaqui Tribe Ms. Tamara. I am sure you will not ever be forgotten for your dedication and hard work you have done for our Tribal Children. There are no words to truly reflect how much I will miss working with you. Our friendship, which is near and dear to my heart, will continue, I know. Ms. Tamara, may you have the most Blessed and fun retirement that you surely deserve. Now go and Relax! Luv Ya! Your Friend Always,

-Jane Westrope

Tamara, congratulations on your many years of service! You have been such significant part of ICWA and I couldn't imagine where the progress in Arizona would be without you. Ahéhee' Táá íyisíí ahéhee (Thank you)

-Kanani Anderson

Tamara, Thank you for all your work and helping improve our community. Now Go make the most of your days and enjoy your new vacation that never ends! Wishing you a happy retirement!

-OJ Flores

Now the fun begins and it is time to live life to the fullest. You made my training and court hearings wonderful with your happy personality and stern presence when you needed to be. Go and Tackle fun and happiness with no resentment or looking back!! Wishing you a happy retirement full of wild and fun adventures.

-Brenda Urbina

Tamara, Thank you for all the hard work you have done working with ICWA. I will truly miss working with you and will miss your positive energy. Enjoy your unlimited weekends. Happy Retirement!

-Norena Valencia

Your hard work and dedication is so very admirable! The contribution you have made during your time here is immeasurable and valuable. You will be missed! Thank you!

-Rolando Flores

Tamara, Henrik Ibsen said, "A community is like a ship, everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm." You have helped to guide the ship for Yaqui families and children for over 20 years. You have had an immeasurable impact on the community, and leave behind a legacy of dedicated service and leadership in and out of the ICWA arena. I wish you much enjoyment and relaxation in your retirement; but know that you will be dearly missed. Much love,

-Virjinya Torres

COLLABORATIVE ICWA DEPARTMENTS



Office of the Attorney General

The Office of the Attorney General (“OAG”) represents the Tribe in all Indian Child Welfare Act matters in state courts. The OAG receives about 390 notices from various states a year. For every notice that is received we create and submit an ICWA enrollment verification to determine the child(ren’s) and/or parent(s) eligibility status. Once eligibility confirmation is received from the Tribe’s Enrollment Department on eligibility status, our Assistant Attorney Generals will intervene in the case. If eligibility is not confirmed, a Non-Intervention Letter will be mailed. Every month the Assistant Attorney Generals, Ms. Tamara Walters and Mrs. Tara Hubbard, and their legal assistants compile a report on the status of all ICWA cases.



Social Services – Children Services

The Children’s Services Program-Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Unit under the Social Services Department strives to achieve this mission by providing support and guidance to families in any state child welfare system through case management services; consultation, collaboration and coordination with state child welfare agencies and courts; education on cultural teachings and ICWA; and advocating for Yaqui children and their families in and out of court. The ICWA unit works in conjunction with the Office of the Attorney General to prevent the breakup of Tribal families during state investigations and team decision making meetings, to place children with family or in Yaqui homes when removals occurs and to advocate for reunification services.

Enrollment

In collaboration with Senior Enrollment Research Specialist ICWA, in order to serve as a liaison between the Office the Attorney General and Tribal Social services. The Senior Enrollment Research Specialist ICWA concentrates on providing Enrollment verification and vital tribal information for child welfare cases. The Specialist conducts a thorough review of all enrollment databases in order to not only verify whether the child is enrollment but also to link that child to family members which information is then reported on a Kinship report. The Kinship Report is vital in the placement of children in the child welfare system. When the child is an enrolled tribal member, the specialist will also issue a Certificate of Indian Blood for the child to show tribal affiliation. The Specialist initiate the Application for Membership as well as request the Birth Certificate from Arizona’s Department of Vital Records for eligible children. In doing so, we are looking to enroll eligible children more quickly so that they can remain connected with their culture and maintain a sense of identity.



**1st Quarter FY20-21
Enrollment Verifications**

Month	Non Member Request	Enrolled Member Request	Total
October	59	0	59
November	35	5	40
December	8	10	18
1st Quarter Totals	102	15	117
YTD	102	15	117

**2nd Quarter FY20-21
Enrollment Verifications**

Month	Non Member Request	Enrolled Member Request	Total
January	44	2	47
February	45	3	63
March	68	3	71
2nd Quarter Totals	157	8	165
YTD	259	23	282

**3rd Quarter FY20-21
Enrollment Verifications**

Month	Non Member Request	Enrolled Member Request	Total
April	40	9	49
May	48	4	52
June	29	2	31
3rd Quarter Totals	117	15	132
YTD	376	38	414



**Antonia Campoy
Tribal Council Member**

How long have you been a tribal councilmember?

2nd consecutive term, but I also served on council in 1995.

Have you had any experience with ICWA?

Yes, I currently have my grandson to be transparent.

How important is it to keep our youth culturally connected?

Very important because we need to teach our children our culture and our language from the time they are born and continue to because if we don't our tribe will lose everything, their culture, history traditions and identity.

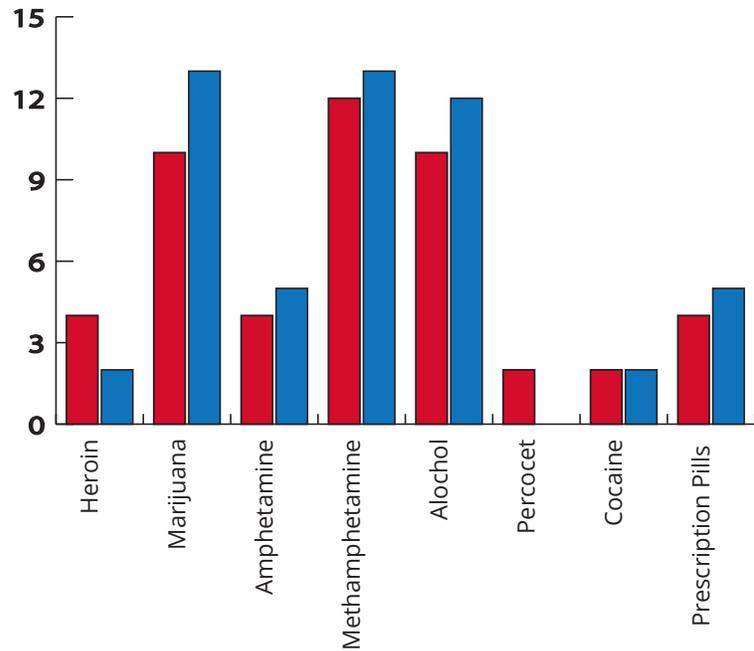
Why is tribal sovereignty important?

Because we need sovereignty to make our own nation, our own rules on how we decide we are going to govern our nation, our families and our children.

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

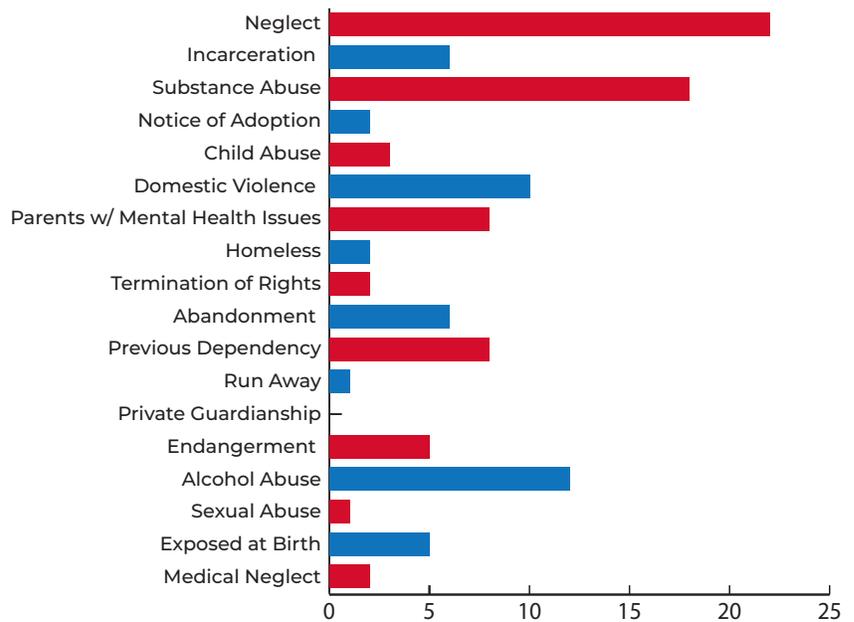
ICWA STATUS REPORT DATA

Substance at Removal



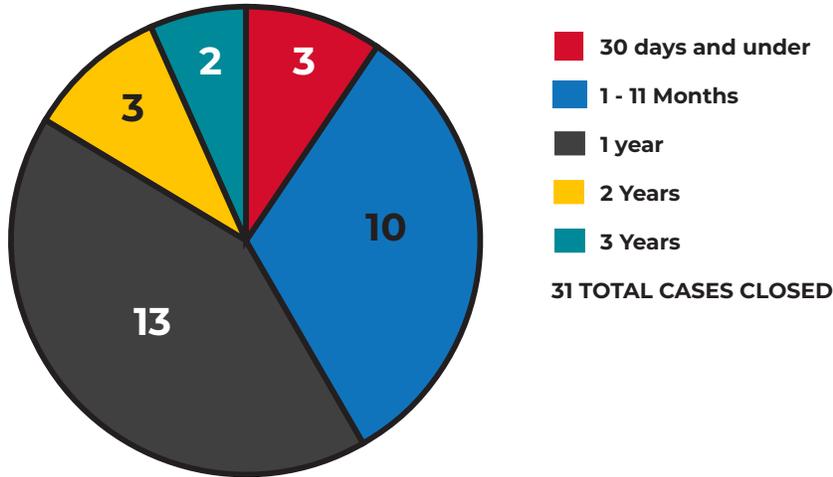
Per the open dependency cases between March 2020 through March 2021 we have identified multiple substances used at the time of removal of the child(ren). We have found that 31% of our open dependency cases have been associated with using methamphetamine at the time of removal.

Cause of Removal

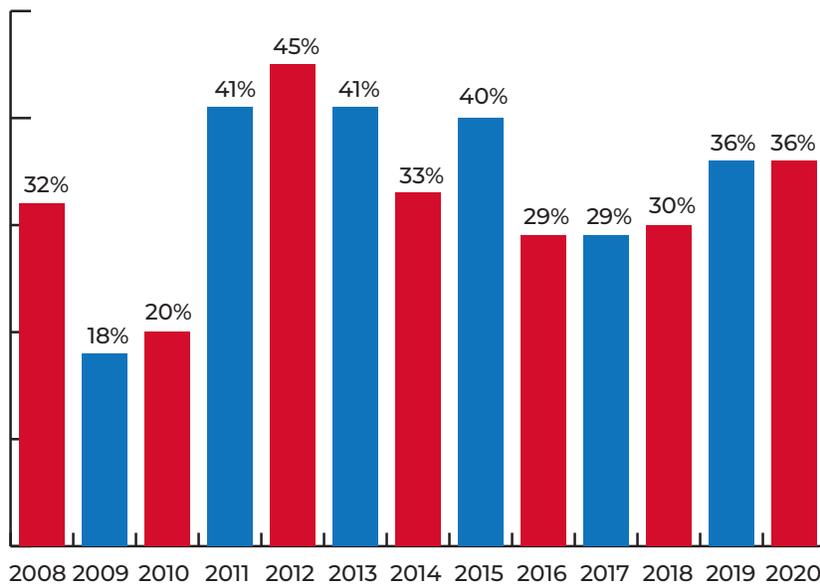


OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL ICWA STATUS REPORT DATA

Duration of Cases



Reunification Statistics



Pursuant to the inherent sovereign authority of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, the Tribe established family reunification as the top permanency preference for Yaqui children. The Pascua Yaqui Children's Code places a strong priority on reunification of children with their parents and does not allow for termination of parental rights. While valuing reunification is clearly important, some children currently are unable to return to their parents. Moreover, by applying active efforts, the ICWA Team, Pascua Yaqui Social Services, and State Juvenile Courts have successfully placed many children back with their parents. The chart below demonstrates that applying active efforts can help prevent the breakup of the Indian Family.

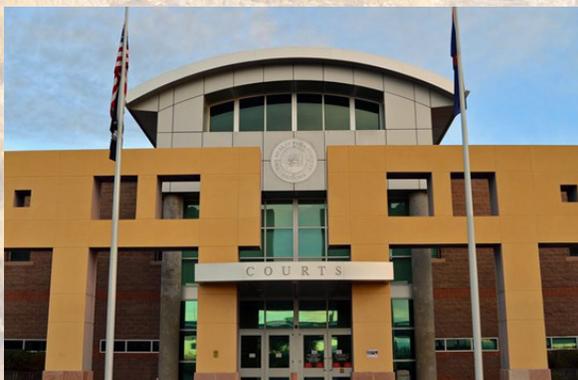


ICWA TRIBAL COURT

In 2019, Pima County Superior Court launched an ICWA Court, with Judge Scott MacDonald presiding. The Pima County ICWA Court has shined as a model example of what is possible for better outcomes for tribal children and families who are involved with the foster care system of states.

The idea for ICWA courts has been developing for years, as Judge Kathleen Quigley of Pima County had learned of it from NCJFCJ. In 2018, Judge Quigley and Judge MacDonald, along with Pascua Yaqui ICWA attorney Tamara Walters attended an "ICWA Court Learning Collaborative" in Denver, Colorado, hosted by Casey Family Programs. Former Councilwoman and ICWA Champion (as a former ICWA child) Rosa Soto Alvarez was a keynote speaker at the event. From that event, the team returned home to Arizona and got to work.

While there many courts around the country that consolidate the ICWA cases on a single docket (one judge, on a pre-determined scheduled day), the ICWA Courts such as Pima County, have done much more. Pima County, with the support and collaboration with Pascua Yaqui Tribe, Tohono O'odahm Nation, Casey Family Programs and NCJFCJ offered an education series to the participants of the court with sessions on cultural values and history of the tribes, the law of ICWA, improved engagement strategies and a special session on Indian Law by Arizona Federal District Court Judge Diane Humetewa, and State Representative Sally Gonzales (a PYT tribal member). In addition to these educational sessions, the Pima County court hosts regular stakeholder meetings for the legal parties and the tribes. The participants report an improved understanding of the law, a forum to address tactical challenges of the court process, and solid relationship building among the parties.



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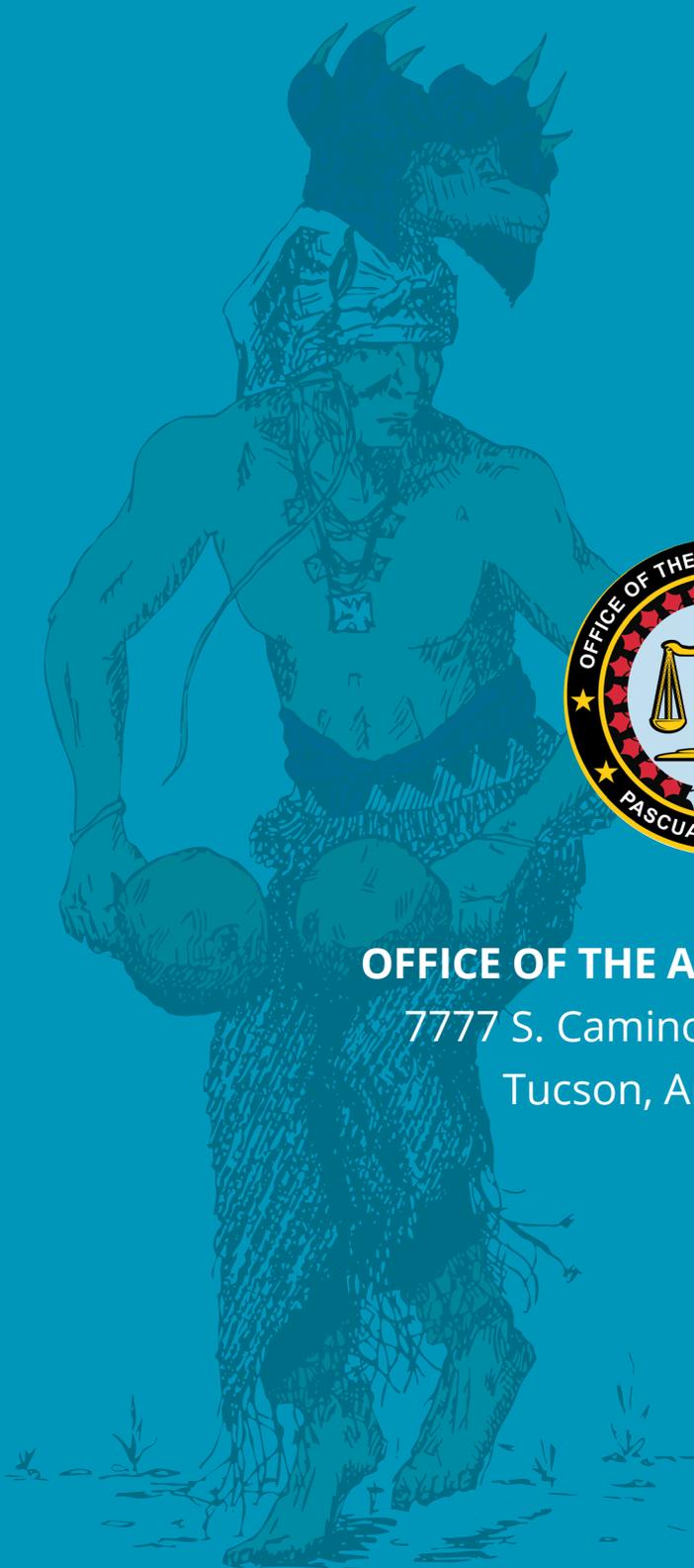
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