

# FACTS for FEATURES



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Photos



## American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month: November 2004



American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month originated in 1915 when the president of the Congress of American Indian Associations issued a proclamation declaring the second Saturday in May of each year as American Indian Day. The first American Indian Day was celebrated in May 1916 in New York. In 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed a joint congressional resolution designating November 1990 as "National American Indian Heritage Month." Similar proclamations have been issued every year since 1994.

### 4.4 million

The estimated number of people, as of July 1, 2003, who are American Indian and Alaska native or American Indian and Alaska native in combination with one or more other races. They make up 1.5 percent of the total population.

<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/race/001839.html>

### 141,000

The estimated number of people who are American Indian and Alaska native alone or American Indian and Alaska native in combination with one or more other races added to the nation's population between Census Day, April 1, 2000, and July 1, 2003. This population increased at a rate of 3.3 percent over the period, roughly the same rate of increase as the overall population.

<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/race/001839.html>

- American Indian tribal groups with more than 50,000 members are Apache, Cherokee, Chippewa, Choctaw, Lumbee, Navajo, Pueblo and Sioux. Cherokee and Navajo are easily the largest, with populations of 234,000 and 204,000, respectively.

[http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?\\_program=ACS&\\_lang=en&\\_ts=102594835162](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_program=ACS&_lang=en&_ts=102594835162)

- Eskimo is the largest Alaska native tribal group, with 37,000 members.

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## Families and Children

**484,000**

The number of American Indian and Alaska native families. Of these:

- 294,000, or 61 percent, are married-couple families.
  - 266,000, or 55 percent, are families with their own children under 18.
  - And 141,000, or 29 percent, are married couples with their own children under 18.
- <[http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?\\_program=ACS&\\_lang=en&\\_ts=102594835162](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_program=ACS&_lang=en&_ts=102594835162)>

**48%**

The percentage of American Indians and Alaska natives who are married.

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**56%**

Among American Indians and Alaska natives age 30 and over who live with their grandchildren, the percentage who also provide care for them.

<[http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/census\\_2000/001442.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/census_2000/001442.html)>

## Population Distribution



**Nation**

**538,300**

The number of American Indians and Alaska natives alone or in combination with one or more other races living on reservations or other trust lands. Of this number, 175,200 reside on Navajo nation reservation and trust lands, which span portions of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. This is by far the most populous reservation or trust land. <<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>>

**57%**

The percentage of American Indians and Alaska natives who live in metropolitan areas, lowest of any race group. A majority of American Indians and Alaska natives lived outside metropolitan areas until about 1990. <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02cn173.html>>

## States

**683,900**

The American Indian and Alaska native population in California as of July 1, 2003, the highest total of any state in the nation. California is followed by Oklahoma (394,800) and Arizona (327,500).

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/002897.html>>

**29,400**

The number of American Indians and Alaska natives added to Arizona's population between Census Day, April 1, 2000, and July 1, 2003. That is the largest numeric increase of any state in the nation.

Florida and Texas added 13,700 and 11,800, respectively. <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/002897.html>>

**19%**

The percentage of Alaska's population identified as American Indian and Alaska native as of July 1, 2003, the highest rate for this race group of any state in the nation. Alaska was followed by

Oklahoma and New Mexico (11 percent each). <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/002897.html>>

## Counties

**154,900**

The number of American Indians and Alaska natives in Los Angeles County, Calif., as of July 1, 2003. Los Angeles led all the nation's counties in the number of people of this racial category.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/002897.html>>

**10,800**

The number of American Indians or Alaska natives added to the population of Maricopa County, Ariz., between April 1, 2000, and July 1, 2003. Maricopa led all the nation's counties in this category.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/002897.html>>



## Age Distribution

**1.3 million**

The number of American Indian and Alaska native children under 18. Children comprise nearly one-third of this race group.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/race/001839.html>>

## 305,500

The number of American Indians and Alaska natives age 65 and over. This age group comprises 7 percent of the American Indian and Alaska native population.

<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/race/001839.html>

## 8%

The percentage of American Indians and Alaska natives who are high school-age children (14 to 17). Along with native Hawaiians and other Pacific islanders, American Indians and Alaska natives top all race and ethnic groups in this age category.

<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/race/001839.html>



## Income and Poverty

### \$34,740

The median income of households where the householder reported they were American Indian or Alaska native, either alone or in combination with other race groups. The median income is based on a three-year average (2001-2003).

[http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income\\_wealth/002484.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/002484.html)

## 20%

The poverty rate of people who reported they were American Indians and Alaska natives, either alone or in combination with another race group, based on a three-year average (2001-2003).

[http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income\\_wealth/002484.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/002484.html)



## Education

### 14%

The percentage of American Indians and Alaska natives age 25 and over who had at least a bachelor's degree.

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## 75%

The percentage of American Indians and Alaska natives age 25 and over who had at least a high school diploma.

[http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?\\_program=ACS&\\_lang=en&\\_ts=102594835162](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_program=ACS&_lang=en&_ts=102594835162)

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## 50,500



The number of American Indians and Alaska natives age 25 and over who had an advanced degree (i.e., master's, Ph.D., medical or law).

<[http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?\\_program=ACS&\\_lang=en&\\_ts=102594835162](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_program=ACS&_lang=en&_ts=102594835162)>

### Homeownership

The American Indian and Alaska native homeownership rate — the percentage of American Indian and Alaska native households who own their own home — is 56 percent.



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### Proud to Serve

## 159,000

The number of American Indian and Alaska native veterans of the U.S. armed forces.

<[http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?\\_program=ACS&\\_lang=en&\\_ts=102594835162](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_program=ACS&_lang=en&_ts=102594835162)>



### Language

## 381,000

The number of people 5 years and over who speak a native North American language.

Of these languages, the most commonly spoken is Navajo, with 178,014 speakers.

<<http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/phc-t20.html>>



### Jobs

## 24%

The percentage of American Indians and Alaska natives age 16 and over who work in management, professional and related occupations.

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Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Jan. 19)/

Back to School (August)

African American History Month (February)  
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)  
Women's History Month (March)  
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/  
St. Patrick's Day (March 17)  
Asian Pacific American Heritage Month (May)  
Older Americans Month (May)  
Mother's Day (May 9)  
Father's Day (June 20)  
The Fourth of July (July 4)  
Anniversary of Americans With Disabilities Act (July 26)

Labor Day (Sept. 6)  
Grandparents Day (Sept. 12)  
Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)  
Halloween (Oct. 31)  
American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month  
(November)  
Veterans Day (Nov. 11)  
Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 25)  
The Holiday Season (December)

**Editor's note:** Some of the preceding data were collected in surveys and, therefore, are subject to sampling error. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: (301) 763-3030; fax: (301) 457-3670; or e-mail: <pio@census.gov>.