

TRIBAL NATIONS TOOLBOX TOURS

ONEIDA

1940 W Mason St., Green Bay, WI

11/12/2025



AGENDA

1:00pm - Welcome & Introductions

1:30pm - General Statements

2:00pm - Update on CDFIs

2:30pm - Opportunities for
Startups/Entrepreneurs -
Skilled Trades

3:30pm - DBE Certification Status

4:00pm - Close

OPENING STATEMENTS

Oneida Council Member Jonas Hill opened with a welcome from Oneida Nation. Stephanie Metoxen, Oneida Indian Preference Coordinator, and Troy Parr, Oneida Community Development, provided opening comments.

Kevin Chesnik, AICCW Executive Director, did a brief Tribal Toolbox Tour overview. He indicated that this is a government-to-government resource opportunity to create new partnerships. He also indicated that tribal member businesses also have opportunities to meet decision makers within state and tribal governments that can help further their business. Kevin suggested that today's discussions can create commitments with meaningful results which will start off next year's meeting.

The following bullets represent points made during the meeting.

TOPICS DISCUSSED

GENERAL STATEMENTS

AICCW provides their members training and offers student scholarships with an annual program to further tribal education. The chamber provides policy advocacy and seeks to match that with what members need. We are always seeking grant opportunities for our members. The latest ARPA grant provided \$2 million to AICCW with over \$1.5 million going to businesses. We also provide economic conference support for our members with the latest example being sponsorships to the WEDC Marketplace event December 10-11.

Aina Vilumsons, WPI, talked about the WEDC Marketplace and its basic purpose.

Fern Orie of WIHEDC discussed HUBs, CDFI, housing, entrepreneurship help from WIHEDC.

David Fleming discussed WEDC financial resources. He mentioned GLITC as a new WEDC partner. They are looking for new Tech Assistance provider [new position – can be virtual]. WEDC promotes and leads Marketplace.

Questions on what is native ownership of business vs tribally owned business and how each can be supported by various state and federal agencies.

Maria State office of Energy – Maria talked about the cost of energy and what energy sovereignty means. They are adding a person for TA / grant writing. There is up to \$5K supporting climate-clean energy related events with community engagement. Example includes a recently created energy efficiency game. She can connect with you to help with energy issues.

ECWRPC – received a USDA site selection grant and held listening sessions and grant sessions

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SBDC Green Bay – talked about assistance – succession planning – assists in getting funding \$600/year – have let \$47 mill – business planning and related – reduce risk.

Bay Lake Regional Planning provides services to local governments and tribes – ED, Trans, Environmental, Mapping, Community Development – disaster recovery program.

Transportation has applied for a safety grant and is developing long term transportation plan.

Troy added there is planning funding from EDA and other organizations. It is good that tribes are engaged with planning commissions which bring in \$\$.



UPDATE ON CDFIs

Kevin indicated that there is concern at the Federal level that funding for CDFI's is either on hold or eliminated.

No support from Fed government – per GM

Fern Orie considers this a real threat. \$60 million has been lent out by CDFIs to tribal members and without the funding CDFIs would operate as revolving loan funds looking for other sources of funds. There are 69 CDFIs in the country and the certification to become a CDFI has become more difficult. Federal Government is always looking for non-Fed non-CDFI funding to support the lending requirements. There is an upcoming DC policy event in December – www.nativecdfi.net . You can make your voice heard. There are over 3000 mainstream CDFIs and the concern is that terminating all CDFI staff is a possibility. Governor Evers is holding meetings to redirect some state monies to CDFIs.

SBDC depends on SBA grants – they have not had money coming in for some time. WWBIC [biggest CDFI in WI] and SCORE are at risk.

UPDATE ON OPPORTUNITIES FOR STARTUPS/ENTREPRENEURS - SKILLED TRADES

KC- use of word capital-technical assistance-CDFI vs grant.

Building vs leasing on Indian land. There are limitations/challenges so do your homework prior to deciding where to put your business. The separate tax/no tax situation should be considered when working on tribal land.

Schneider has a program for truckers in the area.

Marie – Clean Cities has “idling” program for trucking.

Seasonal trucking has a labor challenge.

Business Development tax credit at WEDC.

Difficult for Tribal Members to hire Tribal Members, not available or lack the right skill sets.

Develop Wisconsin has business grants available.

Seek out mentorship programs like GB Packer MP program or the Law Clinic.

Reach out to MANY BANKS – do not just do tribal CDFI funds. Businesses need multiple sources of capital.

NAMC (National Association of Minority Contractors) is a good organization as is AIBL – American Indigenous Business Leaders.

Join a Chamber of Commerce.

Importance of Mentorship should not be overlooked.

Use ChatGPT – COPILOT / BUT REVIEW output as it is very generic in its responses. Leveraging AI to support business functions – confidentiality – verification of data.



DBE CERTIFICATION STATUS

4 agencies in WI provide DBE certification services and they each are reciprocating with each other.

DBE certification has been in place for about 30 years

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Federal Government decertified all DBE firms on Oct 3, 2025. All firms will have to re-certify themselves to stay in the program. Organizations currently cannot set out goals on programs until the certification is resolved. If you were DBE certified it is important to get re-certified.

What will DBE goals be? Still not determined. Each organization will have to look at that.

NEXT YEAR – evaluate if longer or shorter sessions with multiple breakouts would be a better agenda for the Oneida Tribal Toolbox meeting.

ATTENDING RESOURCE AGENCIES



ATTENDEES

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