

# Archived Information

## Gaming and Native American Education: A Qualitative Exploration of USET Tribes

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*Native Americans continue to lag behind other United States citizens in educational achievement, economic stability, and quality of life. Gaming was introduced in the late 1960s to improve the quality of life for Native Americans. However, little research has documented how gaming has affected the education of Native Americans. This study examined 8 of the 14 United Southeastern Tribes (USET) with gaming to analyze the impact that gaming has had on the quality of their tribe's education. Implications for the Poarch Band of Creek Indians and their newly established gaming industry are discussed.*

The education of Native Americans lags far behind that of the rest of the country, although ninety percent of Native American students attend public schools with their non-Native peers (Sparks, 2000). Native Americans have the highest high school drop-out rate (Martinez, 1999, p. 3), 40 percent higher than the national rate (NIGC, 2004, p.22). Further, only 13.3% of Native Americans have an undergraduate college degree, relative to the national average of 24.4% (National Indian Gaming Commission [NIGC], 2004). Such statistics point to the need for Native American tribes to make education of its members a high priority. Many tribes have introduced gaming as a way to generate revenues to improve the education and overall quality of life of their tribal members.

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians, the only federally recognized tribe in the state of Alabama, is one such tribe. With newly established gaming facilities, the Poarch Creek tribe is bringing in much revenue. This revenue is being divided among different programs, one of those being education. In March 2005, the tribal council voted to give every tribal member, ages 10-25, an education scholarship in the amount of \$30,000. The money is designated for books and tuition, and the scholarships went into effect in the fall of 2005.

The purpose of this study was to determine how the gaming industry has affected education in tribal communities. The study examined the impact by focusing specifically on educational funding, educational services, and educational accomplishments of members. The research questions that guided this study were: (1) what impact has gaming had on the quality of education of United Southeastern Tribes with gaming? and (2) what are the implications of the findings for the Poarch Creek tribe and their newly established gaming industry?

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<sup>1</sup> Karla Martin is a member of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians.

## Historical Context

Native Americans were the first to inhabit the United States. However, “for generations this nation’s first Americans have lived in poverty and despair, many on small, predominantly rural Indian lands, victims of torture, genocidal history and a failed system of Federal paternalism” (NIGC, 2004, p. 4). Indian reservations from 1886 to 1934 lost more than 90 million acres of land due to war, removal, reservation policies, land theft, and destruction of native species, which left Native Americans with only 48 million acres (NIGC, 2004). Much of the land was lost due to the passage of the Dawes Act:

The confiscation of Indian lands became easier in 1887 with passage of the Dawes Act, which mandated allotment—a system that subdivided tribal lands and granted ownership to individual Indians. Many of those properties were later sold or leased to non-Indians, who now account for nearly half the total reservation population. (Bruchac, 2004, p. 89)

In the 1960s, Native Americans began fighting to reclaim their land, heritage, and rights (Bruchac, 2004). By the final decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, tribes had made gains, both economically and socially.

Despite the gains that Native Americans have made, there is still a large socioeconomic gap between Native Americans and other U.S. citizens. Many factors contribute to this gap: government policies, a lack of productive land, too little capital for development, inadequate health care and education, poverty, and a fractured sense of identity. For decades, Native Americans have been the poorest ethnic group in the United States (“Harvard...”, 2005). Further, according to the NIGC’s 2004 Census, which compared data on Native Americans to national statistics, Native Americans have a higher rate of infant mortality, diabetes, death by suicide and homicide, overcrowded homes, high school drop-out rate, poverty, unemployment, and violent crimes. Native Americans also have a lower life expectancy rate and proportionately fewer higher education degrees (NIGC, 2004).

## Gaming

As a way to improve the quality of life on Indian reservations, tribes turned to gaming in the late 1960s and early 1970s (NIGC, 2004). The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act was passed by Congress in 1988, “affirming Tribal government authority to use Indian gaming to promote Tribal economic development, Tribal self-sufficiency and strong Tribal government” (NIGC, 2004, p. 6). The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act states that tribes should use gaming for five purposes: “(1) to fund Tribal government services, operations and programs; (2) to promote Tribal welfare; (3) to promote Tribal economic development; (4) to make charitable donations; and (5) to help fund local government agencies” (NIGC, 2004, p. 9).

Gaming was introduced initially to improve economic development. Casinos were expected to be built mostly on poverty-stricken, rural reservations (Barlett, Steele, Karmatz, Levinstein, Frank, & Mustafa, 2002, p. 51). However, that has not been the case; casinos are found in all types of settings, rural and urban. The NIGC (2004) states that today, of the 567 federally recognized Indian tribes, 223 conduct some form of gaming. Tribal government gaming exists in

28 states with a total of 441 gaming facilities (NIGC, 2004). In 2004, the NIGC found that tribal government gaming generated total revenues of approximately \$18.5 billion.

There are three classes of gaming: I, II, and III. Class I gaming includes social games with prizes of minimal value. Class II gaming includes bingo, lotto, and pull-tabs. Class III gaming refers to casino-style wagering and includes all forms of gaming that are not included in Class I or Class II gaming (NIGC, 2004, p. 7). The type of gaming that tribes are allowed to use depends upon state and federal regulations, thus accounting for the different classes and facilities.

Gaming has generated much revenue for many Native American tribes; however, different tribes distribute the money differently. "Only 25% of gaming tribes distribute cash to the members. Most of the money goes to fund general programs, such as services for elderly and young people, as well as education and economic development" (Bartlett et al., 2002, p. 48). Bartlett et al. (2002) state, however, that in many cases non-Indian investors get more than 40% of an Indian casino's profits, leaving the tribe with little to distribute to employment, programs, and tribal members.

There is much debate about the benefits and pitfalls of gaming for tribal communities. According to census data from 1990 to 2000, "gaming has helped alleviate poverty on Indian reservations. Specifically per capita income rose by more than 50 percent, unemployment rates dropped by 17 percent, and population increased 18 percent on the casino reservations" (NIGC, 2004, p. 14). Other sources estimate that "between 1990 and 2000 per capita income grew 27 percent on Indian lands" (Bruchac, 2004, p. 88). According to the NIGC (2004), tribal government gaming has created more than 553,000 jobs nationwide. Tribal gaming operations are being used to build schools, hospitals, police and fire stations, housing, roads, and water, sewer, and sanitation facilities. Tribal government gaming revenues are also being used to fund essential services, provide child and elder care, and preserve Indian languages, cultures, and traditions. Additionally, tribes are donating much-needed resources to Indians and non-Indians alike across the country. After decades of poverty and high unemployment on often geographically remote reservations, Native American people now see gaming as an integral part of tribal economies and a way to promote economic self-sufficiency for current and future generations (NIGC, 2004). Gaming has also had a major impact on education. "In the past two decades Indians have seen an 80% jump in postsecondary school enrollment" (Bruchac, 2004, p. 88).

Although there are many benefits of gaming, there are some downfalls, and gaming continues to be a controversial issue. Aubaurrea (1996) concluded that the negative effects include alcohol and drug abuse, gambling addiction, and fear of losing traditional values. Libal (2004) found that the controversy tends to derive from state officials and religious organizations that believe gambling is wrong or that it will attract crime.

Within the Indian communities, however, people have seen how gaming has saved the tribes from desperate financial circumstances, allowing them to become more independent and to no longer rely entirely on the federal government for financial support. Native Americans have seen time and time again that the American government cannot always be relied upon to adequately address a tribe's needs, so every opportunity for independence is seized with enthusiasm. Indian gaming is an important opportunity for independence (Libal, 2004).

Most of this literature is said to represent all Native Americans; in reality, it focuses mostly on the Western tribes. There is not much literature specifically on the southeastern tribes.

Therefore, this study focuses on these tribes to give a better representation of the USET tribes<sup>2</sup> in the research literature.

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians is part of the USET tribes. Although Class II gaming has been legal since the time of federal recognition in 1984, gaming on this reservation began in 1985 with a bingo hall. In 2002, the Poarch Band of Creek Indians increased the gaming facilities on their reservation by adding three temporary game room/entertainment centers. These three gaming facilities include a bingo hall/game room in Poarch, and Class II video bingo machines in Tallapoosa Entertainment Center in Tallapoosa and Riverside Entertainment Center in Wetumpka. Before gaming, the tribe was funded through grants and federal money. Now, these facilities are bringing in much revenue, which is dispersed throughout the many programs that the tribe offers. In March 2005, the tribal council voted to distribute some of this revenue as scholarships to tribal members ages 10-25. The tribal leaders realize that education is important and want to help support it as much as possible. The Poarch Band of Creek Indians believes that gaming will provide a way to improve the life of tribal members, particularly their education.

Since gaming is so new to the Poarch Creek tribe, no data are available regarding whether gaming has helped the tribal members. This research, which focused on the other 13 USET tribes that have gaming, examined how gaming on other reservations has impacted the education of its members. The major goal of the study was to share this information with the Poarch Creek tribe and others, in hopes that the findings can be used to facilitate sound educational and fiscal decisions that will benefit all tribal members.

## **Method**

To analyze how gaming has affected the education of Native Americans among USET tribes, a mixed methodology design was used; data were gathered through qualitative semi-structured interviews and quantitative surveys.

## **Surveys**

A cover letter and a survey were mailed/e-mailed to the educational directors of the 13 USET tribes. (See Appendix A for a list of the tribes.) The cover letter introduced and explained the project, asked for help, and provided the relevant contact information. (See Appendix B for cover letter.) The survey consisted of six multiple-choice questions, six questions using a Likert scale, and three short-answer questions. (See Appendix C for survey.) Each survey asked for the participant's name, phone number, e-mail address, and an available time for an interview. Eight of the 13 directors returned the survey. Responses to the surveys indicated that the majority of the tribes introduced gaming between 1995 and 1999, with the earliest being 1970 and the latest being 1999. The surveys indicated that four tribes have both Class II and III gaming, three tribes have Class III gaming only, and one tribe has Class II gaming only. All tribes have one to three gaming facilities. According to the surveys, the majority of the tribes said that 75%-100% of their students attend public schools. The data showed that the majority of the tribes designate 1%-25% of revenue for education.

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<sup>2</sup> There are many differences between the USET tribes and the western tribes. This study is a representation of only the USET tribes with gaming and cannot be generalized to the western tribes.

## **Interviews and Field Observations**

Semistructured qualitative interviews were conducted with three participants. Each participant was either the education director or involved with the education department of her tribe. Two interviews were conducted by telephone and lasted approximately an hour. One hour-long interview was conducted at the United Southeastern Tribes Conference held in Mashantucket, Connecticut in June 2005.<sup>3</sup> Four shorter, informal interviews, not audiotaped, were also conducted at the USET Conference. In addition to interviews, field notes were used as a form of data collection. Because it was not feasible to write field notes during conference sessions, the notes were written after the event.

All participants were over the age of 18 and were fully informed of the purpose of the research. Each formal interview participant signed a consent form. All names of participants were removed and tribes were identified only by nation. All participants were asked the same number of questions using an interview protocol (See Appendix D for interview protocol).

## **Data Analysis**

Data analysis consisted of a comparison across surveys according to individual survey questions. Descriptive statistics were used to report data. Each qualitative interview was transcribed verbatim and subsequently coded for recurring themes. The interviews and field notes also were coded. An initial list of 43 categories was collapsed into 18 categories. Interviews were then analyzed using a constant comparative approach that looked at common themes across all data. The three primary themes which emerged from the data—quality of life, per capita/distribution payments/trust funds, and education—are discussed later.

## **Results**

Analysis of the data addressed the following question: what impact has gaming had on the quality of education of USET tribes with gaming?

## **Quantitative Data**

Surveys revealed several positive benefits of gaming:

1. enabled members to attend college without incurring huge loans
2. provided incentives to encourage students to do well in school and set higher goals

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<sup>3</sup> I, Karla Martin, attended the USET Conference as both a presenter and participant. During the conference, I toured the Pequot Childcare Center and the Mohegan Sun Casino and participated in numerous informal discussions with tribal leaders and education directors.

3. provided more employment opportunities, better community services and medical clinics
4. increased funding for other programs
5. introduced more tourism dollars for local economies both on and off the reservation.

Another major benefit of gaming was that it increased tribal independence. The Tribe 3 representative stated that “tribes are receiving less federal funding which is something tribes need to hold on to and fight for even with the increase in revenue. The federal government owes tribes continuing support.”

The surveys also revealed possible problems associated with gaming:

1. unhealthy dependency on per capita payments
2. parents misusing children’s distribution payments
3. small political struggles
4. internal conflicts within families over money
5. different opinions about whether distributions should go to the elderly and to the young.

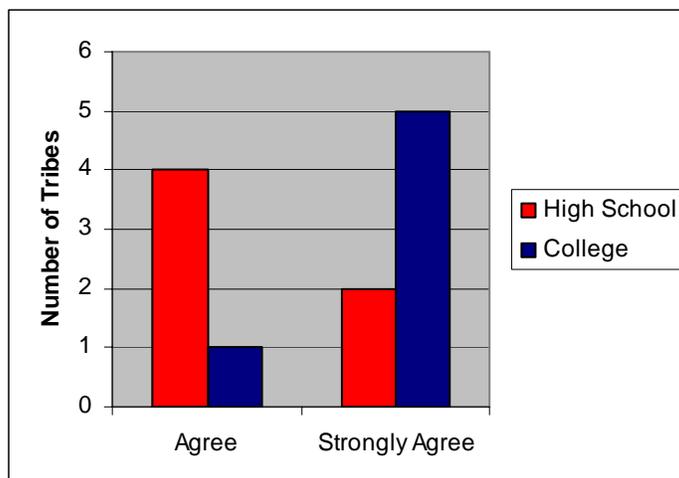
Open-ended questions on surveys revealed the following ways that gaming has affected the education of tribal members:

1. more high school and college graduates
2. more funding to pay for education at all levels, including private schools and colleges
3. more student participation in extracurricular activities for educational assistance to tribal members from kindergarten through the end of life
4. more tribal members are able to attend college or to continue their college anywhere they want in the USA.

The Tribe 1 participant noted, “We now realize that we can achieve any goal that we set for ourselves.”

Figure 1 below demonstrates that on rating scale items, the majority of the tribes “agreed” that since the introduction of gaming, the number of high school students graduating has increased. The majority “strongly agreed” that with gaming, the number of students graduating from college has increased. No one “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed,” and only one remained neutral when asked if the number of students graduating from high school and college has increased since gaming began.

Figure 1: Agreement that Graduation Rates have Improved Since the Introduction of Gaming



The majority of the tribes also “strongly agreed” that gaming has positively impacted the education of their tribe overall and that the educational goals of their tribal members have changed for the better.

### Qualitative Data

The qualitative data corroborate the survey findings about the positive benefits of gaming, particularly the decreased dependency on the federal government and the improvement of all aspects of tribal life. The interviewees also noted their concerns about gaming, most notably the fears that tribal members were becoming too dependent on the gaming revenues. They were particularly concerned about how this affected the tribal youth. According to one respondent, “unfortunately a lot of kids will graduate from high school and hang around until they are old enough to get their trust fund. Once they have spent all of that, then they will look at college” (Tribe 1).

The interviewees also discussed how gaming has affected education, which will be discussed in more detail in the next section. Overall revenues generated from gaming have allowed more resources to be put into schools. One respondent noted that with gaming funds they have been able to “build a school for 3 and 4 year old’s with certified teachers, teacher’s aides, and cooks. They are able to feed the students and take them on field trips” (Tribe 3). However, there is a down side to gaming and education. Tribes are now faced with the challenge of keeping students interested in school once they turn 18 and start receiving their distribution payments.

### Discussion of Findings

Throughout the surveys and interviews, three primary themes emerged, which will be discussed in this section.

### Quality of Life on Reservations

When I was younger the joke about Indian cars was old beat up car with one head light. Now they are fancy, really expensive cars. (Tribe 3)

Most young people get their trust fund and buy a new car. There are not as many people living in trailers or on food stamps or welfare. There is less alcoholism. We found that if you give a person a job, they have less time to drink. (Tribe 1)

With less alcoholism, parents are taking better care of their kids, less domestic violence, and less of many negative things. We have learned that if you keep people busy, they have less time to get in trouble. (Tribe 1)

As these quotations illustrate, Indian tribes have seen improvement in the quality of life, which they attribute to gaming. Members are looking for ways to improve their lives in the long-term. Tribes are now teaching people to take care of themselves. Gaming has given people jobs and helped reduce poverty, as explained by the representative from Tribe 1:

Our younger members have not experienced poverty like [older members] have. They don't understand what it is like to live with no running water and no electricity. They have no idea what it is like to be poor. So they don't understand where we've come from. We appreciate where we are right now; they take it for granted.

Gaming has allowed for more social services which help improve the mental and physical health of its members. One tribal representative stated that gaming funds allow their tribe to provide health insurance to all their members.

Gaming has also improved the quality of work on reservations. All of the tribes agreed that the number of college graduates returning to the tribe to work is increasing. More jobs have been created because of the casinos and increased revenue. Members are returning to accept jobs in the casino, health department, administration department, tribal schools, education department, recreation department, family services, human resources, member benefits department, social services department, police department, communications department, production company, cultural center, and information technology department. Some of the positions that the college graduates are receiving are as teachers, LPN's, RN's, attorneys, forensic scientists, tribal judges, and accountants. Casinos often provide on-the-job training for tribal members. One tribe's representative stated that the casino will give dealing classes to anyone interested in being hired as a dealer. Once they are hired, the cost will be deducted from their paycheck. Another tribe pays for job training if a tribal member comes to the education department and lets them know of their employer's request for a specific type of job training. As one interviewee noted, "with gaming funds, education has definitely benefited. Our older members are going back to school. They know they need an education" (Tribe 1).

The tribes noted there are still some hurdles to overcome. Teenage pregnancy, for example, is still an issue for many tribes. Getting students to go directly from high school to college is another challenge; students want to take time off after completing high school, and because they get distribution payments, they can afford to do so. Another concern is that, in contrast to times

past when local politicians were not concerned with the lives of Native Americans, now that significant money is involved, the politicians are interested in what Native Americans are doing.

### **Per Capita/Distribution Payments/Trust Fund**

A common way that gaming revenues are distributed is through per capita payments. Per capita or distribution payments are equal payments that a tribe will give to its enrolled tribal members. The amount and time of distribution varies according to tribe. Most tribes will not allow children to receive payments until they are 18. However, some tribes give the payments to the parents and others place the payments in a trust fund. Trust funds are a way to hold money, usually per capita payments, until an individual reaches a certain age. “The trust fund is a wonderful and horrible thing” (Tribe 1). This statement represents the ambivalence many tribes have regarding the per capita and trust fund forms of distribution. All of the tribal representatives agreed that a disadvantage of the per capita/distribution payment is that it is hard to keep students interested in graduating from high school once they turn 18, because they start receiving per capita payments. They are also concerned that per capita payments could create a dangerous dependency on the tribe. For example, with per capita payments, the elderly’s income has increased so they are not considered low income and are not eligible for Medicare or food stamps. Their dependency has switched from the state and federal government to the tribe, making them more vulnerable to any economic changes within the tribe.

A disadvantage of a trust fund is that when tribal members turn 21, they may have a large trust fund and instead of attending college, may spend all their money on frivolous purchases. Some of the interviewees felt that the trust fund has actually worked against improving the education of tribal members:

It is hard for them to understand the importance of education. They just think they are going to get that distribution check for the rest of their life, and they don’t understand that’s just extra. This is not for you to live on. It could be gone tomorrow. (Tribe 1)

### **Positive Benefits of Gaming on Education**

With gaming funds, tribes have been able to provide more services to members in the area of education. The tribe is able to give incentives for good grades and attendance. The following are two examples of ways that tribes are able to do this:

We are able to give students K-6 a \$25 gift card to Barnes and Nobles for making perfect attendance. Students with a B average or higher are given a \$25 cash reward. Students are given \$200 for making the dean’s list. The amounts increase as the students progress in school. The tribe will pay tuition for any student that gets accepted into private school. (Tribe 1)

We were able to establish a school and academic program for 3 and 4 year olds. They have hired certified teachers, a teacher's aide, and a cook. They are able to feed the students breakfast and lunch and take them on field trips. (Tribe 3)

The tribe is able to provide assistance to students throughout the year without worrying about running out of funds. In some instances, new schools have been built that are tribally controlled. Also, tribes are able to provide school supplies for students K-12:

They are able to allot \$1,500 to each student K-12 each year for camps, field trips, conferences, and anything school related. All required education expenses are paid whether students are attending public or private schools or vocational college, community college, or universities. Tribes are able to provide required uniforms for students. (Tribe 3)

Indeed, many tribes do not designate a specified amount of money for education. Rather, they spend whatever money is needed to take care of the educational needs of their members. Funding and distribution of revenue for education is determined in many different ways as explained by the Tribe 1 participant:

There is no specific percentage of the budget given to education. Every department submits a budget to the budget review committee and their budget is either approved or not. There is no certain percent designated for education, instead there is really no cap on what we'll spend on education.

Others follow the guidelines of the federal gaming commission in allotting money for education:

The federal gaming commission advises the tribe on how to spend the tribal and casino funds. The education department is given 1%-25% of gaming revenue. There have been no current changes made in the budget. (Tribe 3)

One positive benefit is that tribes agree there is a lower percent of high-school drop-outs since gaming. However, it is still a primary concern of tribes to keep the young people interested in school once they turn 18 and receive their distribution payments. All tribes have concerns about high school retention and do not know how to fix it. Some agree that there are very high standards for graduation, while others say that students just don't take school seriously.

All tribes are in agreement that the number of students attending college has increased since gaming was introduced on their reservation. Before gaming, one tribe had four members who attended college. Today they have 100 members attending some form of college, something that was unheard of before gaming. Another tribal representative noted that before gaming the tribe had about 25 members attending college, and after gaming they have 35-37 students attending college.

Gaming has definitely changed the way people look at education. It is more accessible for everyone now. Where members thought it was something they

would like to do but they could never do, now they know they have the means to do it, it is more or less up to them if they are going to do it or not. (Tribe 1)

All tribal representatives interviewed stated that tribal members are strongly encouraged to attend college and also to obtain a master's degree, Ph.D., J.D., or M.D. Local colleges have specifically designed classes and degrees to train students in Indian gaming, hospitality, and tourism. All of the tribes' scholarship programs guarantee tuition money and some a stipend so that students attending college do not have to work. The Tribe 1 participant stated, "We want them to concentrate on their studies and not have to worry about where their money is coming from." In most cases, every student is allotted the same amount of money, no matter what school they attend. Most tribal members attend college in-state; however, some go out of state and attend some of the most prestigious universities in the country. In most tribes, particular features of the scholarship program have changed each year, and the amount of funding per student has also increased each year. "Now we give undergraduate students \$6,000 per semester and a \$4,000 stipend for independent students and a \$1,000 stipend for students living with their parents per semester. Before, we would pay \$3000 toward tuition and give a \$2000 stipend" (Tribe 1). Some tribes increase the amount of funding for both tuition and stipends as the student attends higher levels of college. However, there are usually some stipulations for receiving funding. The most common is requiring the students to maintain a minimum grade point average each semester or year. None of the tribes has an age limit for funding. The majority of people attending college are in their late 20's and early 30's. Two opinions stated were that members have spent their trust fund and begun looking at college or they have had low-paying jobs for the last 10 years and have now realized that they need to pursue an education and attend college.

According to the data collected from this study, the number of college graduates returning to the tribe to work is increasing. More jobs have been created because of gaming and the increased revenue. Interviewees say that 20-70% of college graduates return to the tribe to work.

### **Implications for Tribes Considering Gaming**

The purpose of this study was to identify implications for the Poarch Creek tribe and their newly established gaming industry and any other tribes considering gaming. The primary implication has to do with distributing money through the form of per capita. The per capita payment is a common way of distributing funds of many tribes who have gaming. As this study indicates, a tribe should be very careful in setting up per capita distributions because they have the potential to work against many of the goals for improving education. The tribal council needs to spend ample time thinking about and planning for the distribution of money. Most tribes suggested that students should graduate from high school before receiving a distribution payment. This presents a legal problem, however; one tribal representative stated that they tried to make payments contingent upon graduation but the IRS said that they would not be able to impose this condition because each tribal member at the age of 18 has a legal entitlement to his or her money. Most tribes' representatives suggested that tribes should not give the distribution payments to minors or their parents, but instead place children's distribution payments in trust funds. Most tribes agreed that giving huge per capita payments is not a good practice, not only because it created problems today, but because it is not a very future-oriented strategy:

That's great for the person here and now, but how is that helping their tribe seven generations from now? What are we gonna look back and say? Geez, back in the early 2000's they were all rich and now look at us, we're poor again. (Tribe 1)

A more fiscally sound practice would be to distribute the trust fund money in increments when members are, say, 21, 25, and 30. Lastly, educational workshops about financial planning are essential.

Another implication of the surveys is that tribes need to consider funding the educational needs of their members throughout their lives. One tribe provides money to its K-12 students to cover school-related activities. Another excellent example can be found in the Pequot Childcare Center, which provides educational services for children ages 6 months to 8 years. In addition to traditional education, they also teach the younger tribal members about the culture and language of their tribe. Research indicates that to improve the poor statistics of Native American education, we must modify the way students are taught and teach them to respect their culture (Sparks, 2000). "The teaching of native cultures is one of the most important and one of the most significant areas of Indian education that, unfortunately, has been given low priority" (Martinez, 1999, p. 3). All of the tribes surveyed noted that there was no age limit for receiving financial aid to attend college. One lesson learned from this study is that there should be no age restriction on educational benefits.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

This research project was conducted to answer two questions: 1) what impact has gaming had on the quality of education of USET tribes with gaming? and (2) what are the implications of the findings for the Poarch Band of Creek Indians and their newly established gaming industry? The data collected using both qualitative and quantitative methods showed that gaming has affected Native Americans in three major areas: quality of life, per capita/trust funds, and education. The primary finding of this study is that tribes need to spend a significant amount of time and study all the issues before implementing any form of distribution payment. Per capita distributions and trust funds are two of the most commonly used ways of dividing gaming revenue; however, this study indicates that both can create potential problems that actually work against many of the goals tribes have set for improving the quality of life. Further, tribes would be wise to consider educational pursuits as a life-long goal and provide funding for its members at all ages.

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## **Appendix A**

### **USET Tribes with Gaming**

Catawba Indian Nation	The Mohegan Tribe
Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana	Oneida Indian Nation
Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana	Poarch Band of Creek Indians
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians	Seminole Tribe of Florida
Manshantucket Pequot Tribal Nation	Seneca Nation of Indians
Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida	St. Regis Mohawk Tribe
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians	Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana

## Appendix B

### Consent Form for a Study Regarding Gaming and Native Americans

Dear Tribal Official/Education Director,

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Karla Martin and I am a member of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians in Poarch, AL. I am also a McNair Scholar at The University of Alabama. As a McNair Scholar, I am expected to conduct research on a topic that I feel is important. Gaming has become an important topic on our reservation. Currently we have 3 gaming facilities.

I know that your tribe has also introduced gaming. I would like to find out how gaming has impacted the education and educational goals of your members. To do this, I would like to interview you at a time and place convenient for you. If I need to, I can interview you on the phone. The interview will last approximately 45 minutes. I have made up questions and will ask the same questions to every tribal official and/or education director. Each participant will be given a copy of the form for his or her records. If given permission, I will tape record the interviews. The names of the participants will not be revealed to anyone; all recordings will be kept confidential and locked in a secure place. Your tribe will not be identified by its name; rather I will use the broader nation's name.

I hope that you will allow me to interview you about the effects of gaming on the education of Native Americans with gaming. Participation in this research does not pose any foreseeable risks to you. There are no direct benefits to you for participating but you will be contributing to the researcher's knowledge on the effects of gaming on Native American Education. This information is very important and will benefit all USET tribes, especially the Poarch Band of Creek Indians.

For more information, please feel free to contact me. If you have any questions about research participants' rights, you may feel free to contact Carpantato (Tanta) Myles, Research Compliance Officer for the Institutional Review Board at The University of Alabama. Tanta's phone number is 348-5746 and e-mail address is [cmyles@fa.ua.edu](mailto:cmyles@fa.ua.edu). I hope that you will agree to participate in this study.

Sincerely,

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Tuscaloosa, AL 35486  
(205) 792-0761  
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I agree to participate in the study of Native Americans and Gaming according to the guidelines discussed above.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

## Appendix C

### Survey Concerning Gaming and the Education of Native Americans

TRIBE:

What year was gaming introduced on your reservation?

**I. Gaming and Education: Please circle the response that best reflects your tribe. Feel free to provide any additional comments that may be helpful.**

1. What type of gaming does your tribe have?
  - a. Class I
  - b. Class II
  - c. Class III
  - d. Class I and II
  - e. Class I and III
  - f. Class II and III

Comments:

2. Currently, how many gaming facilities does your tribe have?
  - a. 1-3
  - b. 4-6
  - c. 7-10
  - d. more than 10

Comments:

3. What percent of gaming revenue is specifically designated for education?
  - a. 0%
  - b. 1%-25%
  - c. 26%-50%
  - d. 51%-75%
  - e. more than 75%

Comments:

4. What percent of tribal students attend reservation schools?
  - a. 0%
  - b. 1%-25%

- c. 26%-50%
- d. 51%-75%
- e. 75%-100%

Comments:

5. What percent of tribal students attend public schools?
- a. 0%
  - b. 1%-25%
  - c. 26%-50%
  - d. 51%-75%
  - e. 75%-100%

Comments:

6. What percent of tribal students attend private schools?
- a. 0%
  - b. 1%-25%
  - c. 26%-50%
  - d. 51%-75%
  - e. 75%-100%

Comments:

**II. Use this scale to answer the following questions.**

SA	A	N	D	SD
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

1. Since gaming was introduced at my tribe, the number of tribal students graduating from high school has increased.

SA    A    N    D    SD

Comments:

2. Since gaming was introduced at my tribe, the number of tribal students graduating from college has increased.

SA    A    N    D    SD

Comments:

3. Gaming has positively impacted the education of our tribe.

SA    A    N    D    SD

Comments:

4. Since gaming has been introduced at my tribe, the educational goals of our members have changed for the better.

SA    A    N    D    SD

Comments:

5. Since gaming has been introduced at my tribe, the quality of life has increased for our tribal members.

SA    A    N    D    SD

Comments:

6. Since gaming has been introduced, the unemployment rates of our tribal members have decreased.

SA    A    N    D    SD

Comments:

### **III. Please provide feedback for the following questions.**

1. How has gaming helped your tribe?
2. What problems, if any, have developed as a result of gaming?
3. How has gaming impacted the education in your tribe?

I would like to interview you by phone to gain more information about gaming and education. If you would be interested in participating in a short phone interview, please indicate below:

Name

Phone number

E-mail

Best time to call you:

## **Appendix D**

### **Interview Protocol**

1. When was gaming introduced on your reservation?
2. What do you see as the positive benefits of gaming? Negative?
3. Was there any controversy surrounding the introduction of gaming on your reservation?
4. If so, how was the controversy handled?
5. How are decisions made about where the revenue from gaming is distributed?
6. Can you give me a breakdown of how the money is distributed?
7. What changes have been made in how the revenue is distributed? When?
8. What ways has gaming improved education?
9. What ways has gaming hurt education?
10. Has gaming changed the way that tribal members think about education?
11. What differences have you noticed about life on the reservation since gaming was introduced?
12. What is the average high school dropout rate of tribal members before and after gaming?
13. What is the average number of tribal members attending college before and after gaming?
14. What percent of college graduates come back to the tribe to work?
15. What kinds of jobs do they take on?
16. Does the tribe offer any job training to make tribal members more employable to the casino industry to help prepare tribal members for the gaming industry?
17. In your opinion has gaming helped improve the quality of life for your tribal members?  
Specifically the education of tribal members?  
What advice would you give another tribe who was considering introducing gaming