HO-CHUNK NATION GENERAL COUNCIL

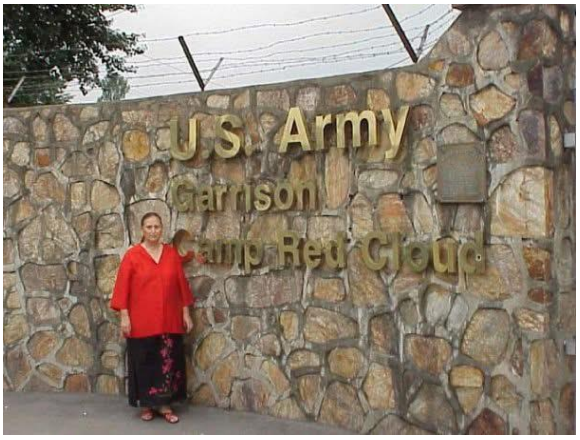
ANNUAL REPORT 2025

"The son of a Winnebago chief and warriors who believe that when a man goes into battle, he expects to kill or be killed, and if he dies, he will live forever."

75 Years of Remembrance: Honoring Our Greatest Warrior, Cpl. Mitchell Red Cloud Jr.
Gi Šeše Mąnį- Ho-Chunk warrior and Korean War hero.

Seventy-five years have passed since the fateful night in Korea when Cpl. Mitchell Red Cloud Jr., a proud warrior of the Ho-Chunk Nation, gave his life in defense of his fellow soldiers and his country. Yet time has not dimmed the brilliance of his sacrifice, nor the pride his people carry for the legacy he left behind.

In 1957, the Army renamed one of its Korean installations Camp Red Cloud, used by U.S. troops until its deactivation in 2018. In 1999, the U.S. Navy commissioned a Watson-class cargo ship, the USNS Red Cloud, christened in San Diego by his daughter, Anita Red Cloud.



Each July 4, we observe Corporal Mitchell Red Cloud Jr. Day. On this day, we honor the Medal of Honor recipient who gave his life to protect his unit in Korea. His legacy lives on every year through celebration, ceremony, and remembrance. Red Cloud's fearlessness, courage, and self-sacrifice earned him the nation's highest military honor, and his warrior ethos continues to guide us. His courage in battle was born from a deeper strength: the strength of our ancestors, our traditions, and our responsibility to protect the people.

His name echoes in our ceremonies, is carried in our stories, and forever etched in the history of both the Ho-Chunk Nation and the United States. The warrior spirit of Cpl. Mitchell Red Cloud Jr. stands as a timeless example of dedication, courage, and love for his people — inspiring new generations to serve with honor, lead with courage, and live with purpose.

A courageous Ho-Chunk warrior and Korean War hero whose valor on the battlefield earned him the Medal of Honor, our nation's highest military distinction.

"With utter fearlessness he maintained his firing position until severely wounded by enemy fire. Refusing assistance he pulled to his feet and wrapping his arm around a tree continued his deadly fire again, until he was fatally wounded."

"Medal of Honor"

Contents

Jon Greendeer
President

Virginia DeFord
Executive Secretary

Ryan Greendeer
Government Relations Officer

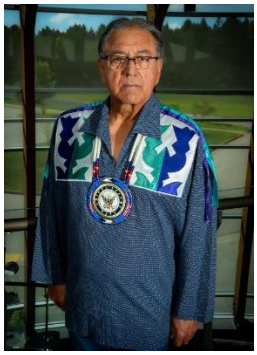
Malachi Emery
Legislative Liaison Officer

Rosalind Cleveland
Public Relations Officer

John Stacy
Executive Administrative Officer

Amanda De Cora
Executive Accounts Manager

John Steindorf
Executive Compliance Officer



Calista Stumblingbear
Presidential Aide

Greetings to our Friends and Family,

You're about to embark on one of the most content-rich and action-packed Annual Reports we've produced in years. Within these pages, you'll find stories that speak to our many accomplishments and to the immense dedication of our working family to the Ho-Chunk Nation. I join so many others in expressing how proud I am to hear the praise for our Gaming, Health, and government entities. While we could never capture *everything* in this 2025 compendium, the pages ahead make one thing clear – our workforce has been hard at work, and it shows with every turn.

The Ho-Chunk Nation is built on an elaborate network of branches and departments, each interdependent and strengthened by collaboration. Our programs, events, and initiatives rarely exist in isolation; instead, they thrive because of shared efforts and partnerships. This spirit of the working together has always been one of our greatest strengths – and it's a value that continues to guide us forward.

This Administration has made it a priority to create more opportunities for us to gather and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of our people. The Founders Day Pow-wow, made possible through a strong partnership with the City of La Crosse, started big – and it's only getting bigger. We also launched Mitchel RedCloud Jr. Day with a parade and exhibits to honor his Congressional Medal of Honor recipient, marking 75 years since his heroic service. The day's success has us already looking forward to making next year's celebration even more memorable.

We also marked new milestone with the first-ever State of the Ho-Chunk Nation Address, a Korean Cultural Exchange, and a record-breaking Family Healing Camp – the largest in our history. These events, along with many others, are helping to strengthen our communities in ways that will have a lasting impact.

Internally, we've made important strides as well. The Personnel Department has fully implemented the Class and Compensation system for our employees, and our Treasury's Grant Manual has been updated to meet the highest compliance standards. Many of our advancements may not seem like much to the average tribal member, but the behind-the-scenes achievements are as vital to our future as the public celebrations we share allowing us stability and growth in the future we will ALL benefit from.

Together, we've accomplished much – and together we will continue to grow, strengthen, and honor the Ho-Chunk Nation the best we can. It is my privilege and honor to serve each of you to the best of my ability with all my heart. Thank you!

In-service to you always,

Jon Greendeer
President, Ho-Chunk Nation

Department Executive Directors

Michael Rave
Dept. of Administration

Hinu Smith
Dept. of Agriculture

Robert Mudd
Dept. of Business

Ryan Crain
Dept. of Education

Penny Ybarra
Dept. of Health

Denise Wright
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William Gardner
Attorney General- Justice

Jean Stacy Snow
Dept. of Labor

Brandon Bleuer
Dept. of Natural Resource

Jeriah Rave
Dept. of Personnel

Sadie Winneshiek
Dept. of Social Services

Bernice Twinn
Treasurer

Clayton Winneshiek
Dept. of Heritage Preservation

Department of Administration

The Department of Administration provides direct services to Ho-Chunk members through branch offices, community centers and Tribal Office Building. Supportive services to other departments and government branches are provided through the divisions of Maintenance, Information Technology, Facilities, Newsletter, Realty, and Planning & Development. The Department achieved important progress in strengthening operations, increasing efficiency, and supporting tribal members throughout the year.

Division of Information Technology

The Division advanced several key projects to strengthen infrastructure, security, and service delivery across the Nation. Major accomplishments:

- Included the transition of the financial system from AS400/Harris to the cloud-based Infor platform
- The launch of Infor Phase 3 modules
- Rollout of organization-wide initiatives such as the Verkada door access system,
- Microsoft 365/computer refresh
- IT asset inventory collection.

IT also secured a new five-year enterprise security agreement, upgraded appliances and firmware across systems, and continued progress on broadband expansion with a successful wireless test at the Andrew Blackhawk Pow-Wow Grounds. The team supported community projects like the Tomah Theater and Baraboo Apartments cabling design, while application developers delivered and refined programs for contract tracking, license plate renewal, enrollment services, and more.

Division of Planning & Development

The Division concentrated efforts on advancing the Nation's energy initiatives to promote independence and sovereignty, securing three grant awards primarily focused on solar development. The Division strengthened capacity within, contracting with Native Sun for EV charger implementation, Tribal Ready for creation of a Strategic Energy Plan, and Sun Bear for a solar feasibility study at the Executive Campus. P&D launched the Legislature-approved Comprehensive Needs Assessment aiming to gather citizen input on priorities and challenges, with results expected in early 2026. The Division also collaborated with the Legislative Workforce Workgroup to survey Gaming and Government employees on workplace challenges, with a final report due August 2025. P&D continued pursuing alternative funding, securing $37,500 from the National Indian Health Board, $100,000 from the Public Service Commission, and $284,486 through GRID Resilience

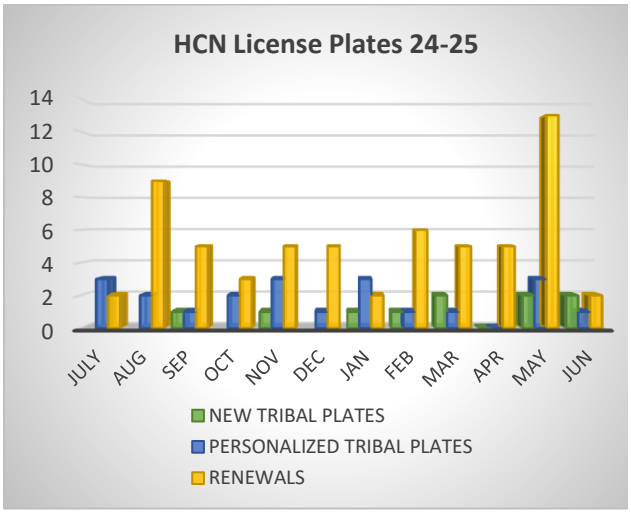
Division of Realty

Fee to Trust

Property (Acres)	County	Submitted	Date in Trust
Christenson (30)	Jackson	03/31/2015	04/15/2025
Ruxton North (5.9)	Jackson	09/26/2017	01/22/2025
Maplewood (11.93)	Jackson	02/28/2019	
White Otter (271)	Juneau	08/25/2008	
Mauston 40 (40)	Juneau	12/29/2014	10/10/2024
Timber Run (4.5)	Juneau	08/23/2019	05/31/2024
Timber Run (4.6)	Juneau	04/18/2025	
Timber Run (4.9)	Juneau	05/07/2025	
Timber Run (5)	Juneau	12/31/2019	10/08/2024
Sherwood (1)	Monroe	09/25/2019	04/10/2025
Joseph Big Arm (27)	Clark	12/02/2019	

The Division advanced key efforts to manage and protect the Nation's lands while improving services for tribal members. The Register of Deeds processed 87 original land-related documents and assisted members with over 100 requests for property records, taxes, deeds, and probate information, while also issuing 10 new titles under the Title Transfer and Recording Ordinance.

Division of Transportation
Fleet Management accomplished several key initiatives to support the Nation's transportation needs. The Division replaced and acquired 15 vehicles through the Enterprise Fleet Management Agreement, and maintained a fleet of 293 vehicles with 792 preventative maintenance and repair services. Additionally, 22 insurance claims for auto body repairs were facilitated, while numerous vehicles and equipment were procured for government and enterprise operations, including police vehicles, grant-funded vehicles, tractors, trailers, and utility equipment. A noted challenge was the inability to accept card payments for license plate and GSA services, with a recommendation for Treasury to implement ACH/POS solutions. Looking forward, goals include targeting replacement of aging vehicles to improve safety and fuel efficiency, enhancing mechanical service capabilities, expanding the Tribal Plate Program with new designs for motorcycles, mopeds, and veterans, and extending maintenance and repair services to tribal members in the community.



Newsletter
The Hocak Worak Newsletter published 24 issues, distributing over 3,100 printed copies per issue alongside an online version, continuing to serve as the Nation's sole news outlet and a written record of Ho-Chunk history and activities. The return of a full-time reporter and recruitment of freelance writers strengthened coverage, though limited staffing and budget constraints restricted story variety. Corrective actions included prioritizing core publishing tasks while seeking freelance contributions. Looking ahead, goals include securing funding for an additional reporter, creating a multimedia reporter position, expanding freelance writer engagement, and enhancing the publication's role in supporting the Nation's strategic plan by breaking down silos and providing a professional multimedia presence for the Ho-Chunk membership.

Division of Executive Facilities
Branch offices and community centers strengthened services and community support by hiring key staff, expanding House of Wellness hours which increased revenue by 29%. Branch offices and community centers completed training, notary services, security patrols, and facility improvements such as tree planting and sound barriers. Offices continued to meet high demand for housing, employment, energy assistance, emergency aid, Elder transportation, and Johnson-O'Malley program support, while also helping members access external resources and providing event spaces for both official and personal gatherings.

Department of Agriculture

Accomplishments during the FY2025:
The Department completed the year with many accomplishments. The Department filled all its funded positions for a total of six full-time employees and one part-time grant funded employee along with two summer youth workers.

A Community Support Agriculture (CSA) pilot project launched with 29 participants receiving weekly boxes of fresh produce. Three high tunnels (30' x 95') have been installed with final completion wrapping up soon, expanding our growing season. Five Resiliency Gardens were created in Ho-Chunk communities.

This growing season saw an increase in planted acreage going from approximately 30 acres last season to 280 acres this season consisting of Ho-Chunk Blue Speckled corn

Corn Smut, a Ho-Chunk Delicacy

(10 ac), Indigenous flint corn (10 ac), northern beans (10 ac), soybeans (120 ac), sunflowers (25 ac), cover crops including sorghum, Sudan grass and rye (103 ac), vegetables, melons and strawberries (2 ac), and two demonstration plots (3 ac). Demonstration plots are 1.5 acres each and dedicated to weed management studies, moisture data collection, cover crop trials or Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK).

In collaboration with UW Madison, weed pressure, weed management practices and moisture levels are being studied in organically grown Indigenous corn.

Accomplishments based on department FY2025 goals and strategies
As a small department, Agriculture was able to provide limited planning and services to the community via Resiliency Gardens. Resiliency Gardens are growing spaces that empower tribal membership to take an active role in food sovereignty efforts. The Department made food production space available to community members either by creating access to existing Ho-Chunk Nation lands, working with an existing site location or partnering with an ally.

Agriculture worked closely with Great Lakes Intertribal Food Coalition, Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advocacy Council, UW Extension and UW-Madison (Rural Partnerships Institute, Indigenous Food Systems project team, Department of Plant

and Agroecosystems Sciences, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, SAS-CAP Project Returning to Our Roots: Rebuilding Native Farming Traditions and Food Sovereignty for Great Lakes Indigenous People) to make various resources available such as the Insect Ambassadors, Intro to Indigenous Agronomy Training Series, Tractor Safety Training, Produce Safety Alliance Training and Grant Writing for Tribal Climate Adaptation.

The Department explored sunflower product development and has identified several companies that offers storage, cold pressing, milling, nutrient testing, packaging and labeling. One having completed a test run of our sunflower cold pressed oil and milled sunflower flour. Researching the development of sunflower products to offer for sale in the future.

Problems and corrective action taken
One of the challenges addressed was identifying qualified candidates for specific employment positions. Through the Department of Labor and with multiple employment postings, were able to hire tribal people in LTE and permanent positions. The Department further coordinated with tribal and university partners to provide trainings that filled gaps in experience.

304 plants were transplanted to a smaller site to promote pollination and will likely use much of the remaining seed for hominy. Planting two varieties assures corn will be available this year.

Goals and strategies for fiscal FY2026
One of the goals is to support food sovereignty efforts and community members who want to become food producers. The plan is to increase participation at Resiliency Garden sites, offer more training opportunities throughout the year, train two apprentices and target at least 16 community members for an agriculturalist training program. This will be funded through existing grants.

A test press was completed on sunflowers to create oil and milled sunflower flour with a goal to pilot sunflower products in FY2026. There are future plans to work with a company that offers storage, cold pressing, milling, nutrient testing, packaging and labeling.

Alternative funding sources and partnerships for FY2025
The Department received two grants this fiscal year. Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATC) awarded the Ho-Chunk Nation a Specialty Crop Block Grant in the amount of $99,162, and WTCAC sub-awarded the Nation $28,740 for Agriculture Apprentices, also have two existing grants, including one from Winrock International for $222,221 to reduce nitrogen and phosphorous runoff and the Natural Resources Conservation Council in the amount of $61,950 for high tunnels.

Social media and Agriculture email
The Department may be found on Facebook at *Ho-Chunk Agriculture* or reached at Agriculture@Ho-Chunk.com

Celina Hall prepping for planting season

Department of Business

The Department provides management direction, oversight, and support for the Nation's revenue-generating enterprises, including casinos, hotels, convenience stores, campgrounds, and bingo facilities. These enterprises supply essential revenues that sustain governmental programs and operations, and fund a wide range of services. The enterprises also support per capita distributions that strengthen the financial foundation of the Ho-Chunk Nation, advancing long-term sovereignty.

Mission

The Department seeks to maximize the profitability of all enterprises through disciplined management and administration. In pursuing this mission, the Department safeguards the Nation's interests, enhances sovereignty, and exercises responsible stewardship over the resources entrusted to it by the Nation.

Accomplishments in the Previous Year

The previous fiscal year witnessed record performance across the gaming portfolio, reflecting strong guest demand, effective marketing, and rigorous operational controls. Ho-Chunk Gaming properties achieved their highest combined net gaming win on record, with multiple months establishing new benchmarks for property results.

Construction began and advanced on a major casino development in Beloit. Work progressed across the principal components, including the casino floor, structured parking, hotel, and conference center. These milestones demonstrate steady movement along the project's path and establish clear momentum toward opening.

To strengthen execution and support future growth, the Department expanded leadership capacity by appointing a retail director and a business development manager. The retail program completed concept design and cost analysis for new Whitetail Crossing locations in Black River Falls, Wittenberg, and Baraboo, and prepared remodel plans for Tomah and Nekoosa. This planning clarifies scope, budgets, and sequencing for the next phase of convenience-retail expansion.

Future Beloit Casino

The Department also advanced non-gaming diversification by continuing renovations and development for the reopening of Ho-Chunk Cinema. This effort broadens the Nation's entertainment offerings and creates an additional community amenity.

Goals for the Coming Fiscal Year

The Department will continue construction on the Beloit casino and drive the project toward a timely opening. Internal teams and external partners will coordinate build-out, systems integration, staffing, training, and operational readiness to ensure a smooth launch and a high-quality guest experience. Architectural plans for new Whitetail Crossing stores will be finalized, and construction will begin. Remodels at existing locations will proceed to modernize facilities, improve guest convenience, and elevate profitability. The Farnum Center is planned to be developed into a business support facility for the gaming portfolio. The Department will finalize sportsbook readiness and implement operations as soon as compact approvals are in place. This initiative will integrate with systems and loyalty programs, and it will follow

responsible-gaming standards and regulatory requirements.

Food and beverage offerings for patrons are planned to be expanded through the opening of additional dining venues at gaming locations. This expansion is designed to increase guest satisfaction, extend length of stay, and grow revenue.

The Department will endeavor to reopen the Ho-Chunk Cinema, located in Tomah, as an independent theater, restoring a valued asset and diversifying enterprise income. Finally, the Department will prepare a comprehensive land-use plan that guides site selection, development phasing, and coordination with relevant jurisdictions. This plan will align long-term business needs with community priorities and sovereignty considerations.

Ho-Chunk Gaming Wittenberg receives Business of the year Award

Department of Education

Hoocąk Ee Coonį Važiperes Hocira

The early childhood program successfully secured licensing compliance, modestly increased enrollment, and expanded Hoocąk-language instruction for both children and parents through classes, books, and assessments that showed steady improvement. Major achievements included delivering books to the D1 Library, providing language classes, upgrading facilities, strengthening family engagement with adjusted schedules, and securing new funding opportunities while joining statewide grant and training cohorts. Overall, the program made measurable progress in language revitalization, parent involvement, and child care quality. Continued growth, data tracking, and timely distribution of materials remain priorities.

Wąąkšik Pįį Hirušja Kįį

The Good Life Program opened the Ho-Chunk Public Library & Maker's Space at the D1 Community Center, with about 6,000 books and games. With IMLS grants it delivered broad in-person and virtual culture, language, arts, and college and career programming; its clearest outcome was Money Path financial-literacy at General Council, where 100% of age-eligible youth reported increased college and career awareness, and all federal grant reports were accepted. Participation remained strong and relationships with schools improved. Major risks are federal refusal of no-cost extensions prompting program shutdown and service transitions to other DOE divisions, the need to sustain the Library and transfer two IMLS grants to DOE/Library management, Treasury financial data delays, and staff continuity loss during handoff.

George Greendeer with Family Healing Camp Children

Head Start

The Head Start Division operated six centers with 42 staff (34 full-time, 8 quarter-time), and served 115 children (about 62% Ho-Chunk), including 20 with identified special needs. Services covered 159 instructional days, 100% family participation in orientation, two home visits and three conferences per family, active governance (Policy Council, local committees, HSAC), and broad family support for job skills, budgeting, taxes, and healthy meals. Health compliance was strong: 112 immunized (3 waivers), 103 up-to-date with 9 in progress, 103 dental and 103 physical exams, 109 vision, 101 hearing (1 refusal, 3 unable).

Major accomplishments included implementing new federal Program Performance Standards and passing the FA2 review, simplifying the application process, demonstrating child growth, securing the 2025–26 federal continuation grant (level funding; no COLA) and submitting the 2025–26 state grant, expanding staff professional development, sustaining monthly volunteer literacy (9 new books per child per year), updating emergency plans, and advancing facilities work for the Ahuco playground and the Mission facility's parking, and bus inspections. Key challenges are flat federal funding amid

rising costs, contractor delays for, and ongoing regulatory changes.

Long-range goals focus on increasing parent involvement including center-level tracking and biannual reviews, ensuring 100% medical and dental coverage and exams in partnership with the Nation's Health Department, addressing the opioid crisis with parent education and child prevention, and maintaining full compliance (licensing, CACFP, audits, CLASS).

Disabilities Division

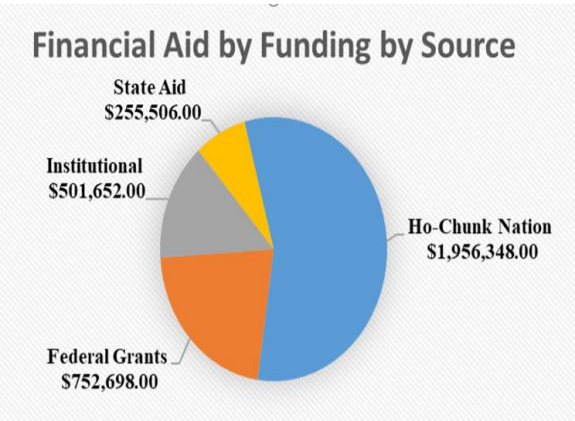
The Division supports HCN families through IDEA-driven special education services, parent advocacy, and transition-to-adulthood guidance. 2024–25 shows 110 IEPs, with typical annual service levels reported as serving roughly 51–74% of eligible students. The Division provides comprehensive case support including IEP and §504, evaluations, placement changes, transition referrals. The Division also delivers staff and family trainings, and presents statewide on culturally responsive practices. Since 2017 the Division has leveraged $415,000 in external funds but notes recent changes may affect this component.

School-Community Relations (SCR)

SCR delivers liaison, advocacy, and professional development while administering Johnson O'Malley and the PreK–12 Grant Program. The Division processed over 750 PreK–12 requests under a $2,000 per-student cap. The Division plans direct outreach to 1,397 enrolled Ho-Chunk students ages 3–18. Across the 11 Johnson O'Malley areas, Indian Education Committees met and funded reimbursements and cultural programming; July 2024 Back-to-School events supplied backpacks and supplies to 800 students. SCR maintained wide district outreach, advocacy (including IEP/504 support), equity meetings, and cultural presentations and tours for over 400 elementary students; the Director also facilitated SEED cohorts.

IEC Location	JOM Students
Black River Falls	310
Baraboo-Wisconsin Dells	150
Tomah	92
Dane County	62
Nekoosa-Pittsville	55
La Crosse	54
Wittenberg	42
Wisconsin Rapids	26
Osseo-Fairchild	8
Stevens Point	6
Eau Claire	5

Higher Education awarded 421 scholarships to 218 students totaling $1,956,348 in 2024–25, coordinated with FAFSA to maximize aid, and saw 51 degree completions (34 undergraduate and 17 graduate). Staffing is being rebuilt via a BIA-funded advisor. Tutor Services ran 19 tutors across 11 areas serving 327 students under 14 MOUs, expanded district partnerships, standardized interim data tracking while awaiting Skyward. Top PreK–12 requests underscore household cost pressures including internet access, extracurricular fees, equipment, and school meals. Overall, services and collaboration are strong, but a functioning student data system, stable multi-year funding, and added staffing are the most urgent needs.



Department of Health

To promote a high quality of life with holistic health care to those serve with an emphasis on the traditional Ho-Chunk way of life; and to empower each individual and family to make informed decisions regarding their present and future health.

Behavioral Health Division

The program secured significant funding, including the State Opioid Response (SOR4) Grant ($462,490.11), Tribal Nation Opioid Abatement Effort Grant ($524,864.00), SAMHSA Medically Assisted Treatment–Prescription Drug and Opioid Addiction Grant ($525,000.00 through 2026), and Urban Rural Women's Substance Use Services Grant ($385,137.00 through December 31, 2025).

Core services include medically assisted treatments substance abuse at HOW and BRF Health Clinic, with increased use of Sublocade to reduce misuse risk. The program expanded residential, transitional, and sober living options through agency partnerships, while enhancing crisis and recovery support via Shared Care Managers and expanded Peer Recovery Specialists.

Community outreach included participation in public events, powwows, and Narcan trainings. Staff received specialized training in Moral Reconation Therapy, Youth Mental Health, and Mending Broken Hearts. Hostopi Hoci gained state recognition as a licensed sober living entity. Overall, the program advanced a coordinated approach to treatment, recovery, and community education.

Community Health Division

The Division expanded its food distribution program by adding extra virgin olive oil and locally sourced wild rice. 43 participants attended Health & Wellness classes, and 219 patients received one-on-one education from a Nutritionist or Exercise Physiologist. The division hosted community events such as Green Corn, Diabetes Walks, Foraging Walks, and a Canoe Trip, reaching 1,302 participants. Additional classes, including cooking, canning, Youth, and TAU, provided education to 1,870 participants.

Monthly foot clinics continued to maintain steady participation, helping reduce specialist visits and lowering insurance and co-pay costs associated with foot care.

Gardening event at Wittenberg

Environmental Health Division

The Division completed a Phase 1 environmental review for the Beloit Casino, led a health facility planning study, and delivered community health services including 386 pet vaccinations, 310 car seats, 42 smoke/CO alarms, 500 emergency kits, and safety education. The division oversaw food safety inspections, invasive species control on 2,300+ acres, water/wastewater upgrades, stream monitoring, well/septic projects, and air quality improvements through new equipment and grants.

Medical Services Division
The Division provides comprehensive health care to the Ho-Chunk Nation at two ambulatory clinics, in Black River Falls and Baraboo, WI, and is committed to improving the health outcomes of the patients and, through collaboration with other divisions, the rest of the Nation. The clinics offer a full spectrum primary care, including prenatal, pediatric, and adult medicine; podiatry; dental; optical; and recently radiology services. Chronic conditions were managed such as diabetes and heart disease, as well as acute illnesses. The Division is led by the Director of Medical Services, who focuses on logistics and operations of both clinic sites, and the Medical Director, a physician who provides care to patients and focuses on efforts to improve quality of care and on leading and supervising the clinical teams.

Pharmacy Division
The pharmacy program provides a range of services to improve patient care and access to medications. These include nationwide prescription mail-out and optional medication synchronization to ensure timely, coordinated refills. Technology integration through the RxLocal mobile app and text notifications supports convenience and communication. Patient-centered care covers diabetes management with education and follow-up, continuous glucose monitoring, and both medication and non-medication approaches. Additional offerings include Narcan training to prevent opioid overdose, psychiatric clinical services with nutritional psychiatry, nicotine treatment, hormonal contraceptive management, and a co-payment incentive program offering most generic medications at no cost for non-Tribal members.

Public Health Division
The division completed a Tribal Health Assessment, advanced Community Health Improvement Plan sessions, and expanded outreach through events, referrals, suicide prevention training, and cultural programs. Workforce capacity increased with new hires, role transitions, and staff development plans. Partnerships and programs grew in immunizations, maternal/child health, and health promotion campaigns. Additional efforts included vaccine clinics, youth resource distribution, planning for health vending machines, and strengthening tribal and statewide collaborations.

Block party at Black River Falls

Health Information Systems Division
Health Information System Maintain core Information Technology systems along with collecting, storing, managing and transmitting patient's electronic medical record.

Quality Improvement Division
The Quality Improvement Division enhances safety, efficiency, and effectiveness in health care by continuously measuring performance, identifying areas for improvement, and applying the PDCA model, leading to reduced costs, higher quality care, and successful AAAHC and PHAB accreditations.

Department of Housing & Public Works

The department operates through four integrated divisions: Home Ownership, Heavy Equipment, Finance, and Rental Management. These divisions work together to fulfill the Nation's mission of providing quality housing, infrastructure support, and related services for tribal members.

The Home Ownership Division (HOD) supports tribal members in achieving and sustaining homeownership through a variety of programs, including Down Payment Assistance, Existing Mortgage Assistance, Home Repair Loans, the Elder Roof Program, and the Waste Management Program.

- The Existing Mortgage Assistance Program FY23/24 budget was successfully spent out, and will be used to capacity with the FY24/25 budget.
- The Down Payment Assistance Program budget was successfully spent out, and will be used to capacity with the FY24/25 budget.
- Five Elders received assistance with their roofs last year and the Elder Roof Program and are will be used to capacity for FY24/25.
- The Waste Management Program is assisting 57 Elders and has recently been reviewed with each vendor to reconcile services.
- The Home Ownership Manager and Project Coordinators are currently enrolled in professional development courses related to Real Estate Licensing, Home Inspector Licensing and General Contractor Qualifying.
- HOD Staff participated in Meet and Greet events sponsored by HHCDA in which tribal members gained access to in person conversations related to assistance programs offered throughout the Ho-Chunk Nation.
- Develop abandoned home rehabilitation procedures.
- Expand partnerships with organizations such as HHCDA, First Nations Community Financial, Bay Bank, the Labor Department's 477 Program, and the Office of Native American Programs.

The Heavy Equipment Division (HE) plays a critical role in site development, snow removal, and infrastructure support for both members and other Nation departments.

- New plows for upcoming snow removal season.
- New attachment for the skid steer.
- New tree chipping machine.
- New quad axle dump truck was ordered.
- Collaborated with the HOD to provide Site Development for members.
- A large interdepartmental project with Department of Natural Resources.

HE is also revising its policies and procedures and seeking grants to replace aging construction vehicles. Future plans include improving waste management efficiency in Black River Falls and exploring the construction of a new office and garage.

The **Finance Division** provides the backbone for the Department's operations, processing payments to vendors, managing rental payments, issuing tenant statements, and supporting all other divisions in achieving their goals.

- Continue to send out tenant's monthly statements.
- Continue to send out Home Repair Loan monthly statements.
- Answer questions and concerns from RM tenants and Homeownership clients.

- Updated all TrueBill tenant information.
- Submittal of budgets based upon spending caps provided.
- Professional communication training/certification.

In the coming year, Finance aims to enhance responsiveness, improve efficiency, and strengthen collaboration with the Treasury Department for accurate reporting and better service to both staff and members.

The **Rental Management Division** (RMD) oversees 265 rental units across multiple districts.

- The RMD has worked on new policies and procedures that were written and implemented, to include: Police Calls & Emergency Housing.
- Completed the Annual Fire inspection for all rental units and all units have received new fire extinguishers.
- Completed structural/rental annual inspections for 2024.
- Completed community clean-up for 2024.
- The DOH RMD had a successful plowing season. The elders were the main concern and making sure their safety was top priority.
- The RMD currently has 37+ Elder and Elite Elder tenants combined.
- The RMD is continuing to address all benevolent services for tribal members roof replacement on Bush Road house
- The Department of Housing RMD and HHCDA are actively working together to implement a combined rental application to better assist tribal members.

The Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Housing oversees 265 rental units across Districts 1–4. Maintenance in Districts 1–3 is ongoing through collaboration between the Rental Management Construction II and HVAC teams. Currently, 80 individuals are on the waiting list for housing in all districts. The RMD is also partnering with the Home Ownership Division to explore purchasing additional rental units in high-demand areas identified from the waiting list. Broader strategies are underway to either purchase or build new units, aiming to increase housing opportunities for members and meet growing demand.

The Department is the key agency responsible for assisting members to secure housing in one of our Nation-owned rental units. Assisted qualified tribal members on their path to homeownership. The Department is committed to expanding opportunities for homeownership, maintaining safe and well-kept rental properties, supporting infrastructure development, and creating partnerships that strengthen services. Through careful planning, strategic funding, and community collaboration, the Department aims to improve housing availability, quality, and sustainability for the Nation's members now and in the future.

Heritage Preservation

Veterans Affairs Division

The Division serves as the primary point of contact for Ho-Chunk Veterans and their families, ensuring that those who have served or are currently serving in the Armed Forces receive the advocacy and services they deserve. Guided by its mission to provide efficient support systems, it's vision to guarantee that every Veteran receives entitled benefits is critical.

Accomplishments include the establishment and management of the Veterans Supportive Housing facility, now named Maanape Hocira, and the development of essential housing policies and agreements. Additional achievements reflect alignment with departmental goals, such as closing and securing state grants, obtaining initial accreditation for claims processing, updating emergency assistance guidelines. Despite challenges veteran data collection, outreach, and engagement, corrective strategies have been implemented, including continued training, data collection for a master list, and promotion of outreach events.

Museum Division

The Ho-Chunk Nation Museum and Cultural Center safeguards over 10,000 items that collectively represent the Nation's rich history, spanning from the Ice Age to present day. Despite facing its second emergency, the Museum successfully preserved its entire collection without loss, thanks to the swift and dedicated actions of tribal members committed to protecting the community's shared heritage. In support of long-term facility planning, a Museum Task Force was formed with representation from the Legislature, Heritage Preservation (CRD, Language), Administration, and the Library, following the passage of Resolution 02-18-25 I. Progress has also been made in securing funding, including the submission and approval of a Luce Foundation Planning Grant and the allocation of Annual Gala proceeds into the Museum's special events budget line. The Museum continues to advocate for reinvestment of these resources into the development of a new Museum building to ensure the preservation and celebration of Ho-Chunk history for generations to come.

Museum Director Lee and Library Director Falcon

Language Division

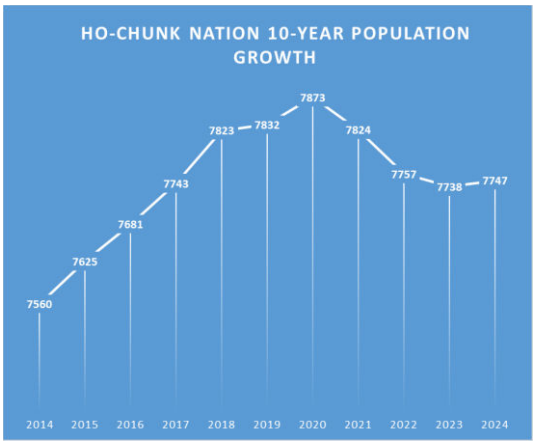
The Division advanced significantly this year with the initiation of the Generational Language Plan (GLP), a long-term vision for revitalization inspired by models from the Māori, Hawaiian, and more recently the Menominee. This planning effort was strengthened through collaboration with other Indigenous language programs at a First Nations Development Institute gathering in November 2024. The Hoocąk Academy continued curriculum development, introducing *It Starts with Me*, a language orientation class, completing the four-course Online Pathway Program 1-Series, and expanding the Online Pathways 2-Series to support learners progressing from novice to intermediate proficiency.

The Division faced challenges, including ongoing understaffing since the pandemic and the heartbreaking loss of several Eminent Speakers. These losses underscored the urgent need for more apprentices and for greater transcription and translation of archival recordings to preserve authentic Hoocąk for future generations. Participation Hoocąk sessions remained strong, reflecting both the dedication of instructors and the community's commitment to language learning. Teaching Hoocąk is uniquely demanding, requiring not only linguistic skill but also cultural responsibility to sustain Ho-Chunk identity through language transmission. The loss of two of the most active Eminent Speakers was deeply felt, but their legacy continues to inspire the Division's efforts to carry the language forward.

Enrollment Division

Services:

- Process applications for Tribal Membership
- Maintain the tribal membership's records
- Maintain Administrative Record for Tribal Court
- Administer the Bereavement Fund
- Generate Certificates of Degree of Indian Blood
- Generate Family Trees
- Create Tribal ID Cards
- Process annual Address Verification forms
- Process Minor Trust Fund
- Provide Eligible Voters list for all Tribal Elections
- Provide Quorum information for the annual General Council meeting



HCN 10 year population growth

Cultural Resources Division

The Division functions as a preservation advocate and vital resource for the Ho-Chunk Nation's government, tribal members, and the public. It provides professional preservation services such as representing the Nation in Section 106 and NAGPRA matters, conducting tribally sensitive archaeological work, offering public educational outreach, and ensuring cultural oversight. The division also engages in research, archiving, and supporting the development of accurate information specific to the Ho-Chunk people.

In its ongoing initiatives, the division is establishing a research library and archival area to support both tribal and external researchers interested in Ho-Chunk history and culture. Additionally, it is developing a comprehensive preservation code to safeguard cultural objects, burial sites, and historic or prehistoric sites unique to the Nation. Another current goal is to create a cultural retreat and worksite, designed to provide the Ho-Chunk people and the public with opportunities to experience and learn about cultural practices that have sustained the Nation through significant historical challenges, including two glacial events.

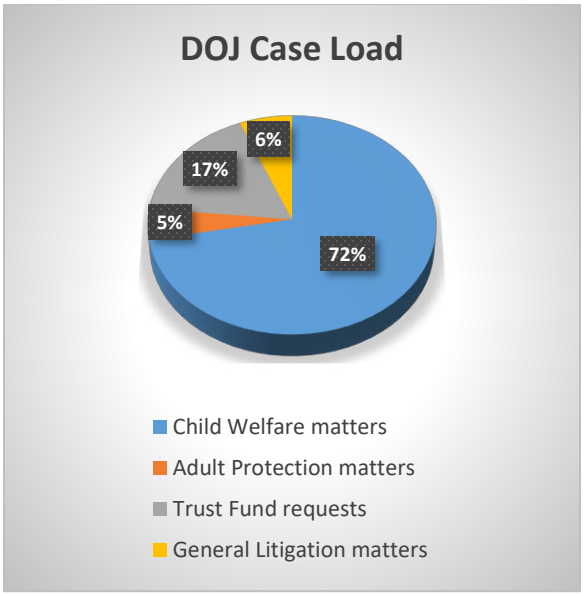
Department of Justice

The Department of Justice defends the sovereignty of the Ho-Chunk Nation and protects the legal rights and interests of the Nation and its Tribal Members. It advises governmental departments and boards, represents the Nation in Tribal, State, and Federal forums, supervises the Ho-Chunk Nation Police Department (HCNPD), and supports the Law Enforcement Commission.

FY 2024–2025 Highlights

The Department filled all attorney positions and deployed two or more attorneys to each department to manage incoming matters. A second paralegal served for most of the year, and contract-review capacity was expanded. Staff also reviewed approximately 1,200 contracts and prioritized forum-selection clauses that place disputes in the Nation's Courts. The Department handled a broad portfolio of cases and issues, including child and family services, guardianships and trust funds, employment, election defense, housing, and various civil citations. Intergovernmental collaboration advanced through the renegotiation of law-enforcement agreements with six counties, strengthening coordination and service on Tribal lands. Policy work continued through legislative commissions and workgroups, including items for the PD Advisory Board and Election Code amendments. The Department enhanced public access by developing website content for Tribal Members on General Council Branch matters.

The HCNPD secured a substantial equipment grant, continued officer recruitment, and sought qualified candidates for the PD Advisory Board. The Law Enforcement Commission seated alternate members, increased oversight activity, and coordinated with Housing and HHCDA to address community-specific safety issues.



Election Board

The Election Board administers elections under the Election Code (2 HCC § 6) to ensure fair and proper processes. It comprises eleven Delegate Members and eleven Alternate Members who serve staggered two-year terms, with the Chair and Vice-Chair chosen from the Delegates. In early 2025, Department attorneys trained board members on the Open Meetings Act, the Code of Ethics, and board duties, emphasizing obligations and standards of conduct. Following a General Council resolution on September 21, 2024, the Board called a secretarial election on July 24, 2025, to be held at General Council on September 20, 2025. The proposed amendment would add Article II, §1(e) to allow persons aged 18 or older, who were enrolled in another tribe as minors, to enroll with the Ho-Chunk Nation upon relinquishing the other enrollment, if they meet all other Article II, §1 criteria. The amendment's validity requires participation by at least 30% of eligible voters under Article XIII §1 and Election Code §3.bb; if turnout is below 30%, the amendment fails regardless of vote split. The FY 2024–2025 cycle included three special elections (one

resignation, one removal, and one court-related vacancy), a redistricting election, and primary and general elections, supported by three budget modifications. Two District 4 court cases were filed; one briefly halted the election and both were dismissed, with the second dismissal occurring shortly before the swearing-in on July 2, 2025.

Police Department (HCNPD)
The Department is focused on improving officer retention, filling two current vacancies, and reestablishing a Drug Enforcement Officer position. It will provide timely operational data to the Attorney General and Area Representatives and expand capacity by certifying patrol staff as Field Training Officers. Recruitment emphasizes Tribal Members who are interested in law-enforcement careers and qualified candidates for the PD Advisory Board. The Department will also pursue grants for portable radios and squad car upgrades, and will maintain a visible presence at community events while responding to calls for service.

HCN Police Truck

Law Enforcement Commission (LEC)
The LEC now has confirmed Commissioners from each of the six counties with law-enforcement agreements and is completing the appointment of alternates. It meets monthly to address safety and crime and hosts quarterly coordination meetings with county agencies to share information and resolve concerns. Collaboration with Housing and HHCDA has improved responses to community-specific needs, and state-grant-funded events have supported community safety and well-being. The LEC delivered Public Law 280 trainings to five of the six counties in the last eighteen months to clarify criminal and civil jurisdiction on trust lands. Updated county agreements have further improved operations, and additional amendments are planned to strengthen accountability and protect the rights of Tribal Members.

FY 2025–2026 Priorities
The Department will continue serving the Nation under the Establishment Act and support HCNPD hiring and retention, reactivate the Drug Officer position, and improve coverage in areas distant from Black River Falls. It will pursue Criminal Code updates to enable effective prosecution of citations and crimes on Tribal land and will embed restorative-justice principles that promote personal and community healing. It will support community-based efforts to reduce substance abuse and related crime. In partnership with Children and Family Services, the Child Support Agency, and the Judiciary, it will develop a more efficient justice case-management system.

Funding and Partnerships
The Department will continue to pursue grants and other funding opportunities that align with these goals. It will maintain and refine partnerships established through county law-enforcement agreements to improve services and accountability.

Department of Labor

During the FY24-25, the Tribal Workforce Development Department achieved significant milestones in workforce training, community outreach, and inclusive employment initiatives. Notable accomplishments included participation in job fairs and the strengthening of partnerships with construction firms, local businesses, and vocational rehabilitation services. Challenges such as inconsistent outreach engagement were addressed through improved internal coordination and the utilization of virtual platforms. Looking ahead to fiscal year 25-26, the department plans to expand partnerships, enhance inclusive training programs, and adopt innovative outreach strategies to better serve the community. Throughout the year, the Tribal Workforce Training and Development department:

Action	Number of Instances
Supported members	251
Referrals	47
Individuals Trained	88
Supportinve Services	87

HCN Dept of Labor Staff

1. Accomplishments during the Prior FY

Over the past fiscal year, the Department made significant strides in workforce development and community outreach. Among our notable achievements was our participation in multiple job fairs, including the Madison Construction Job Fair with BigStep, WTC Construction Job Fair, and the DWD Event at HCG-BRF. The team also engaged in the Career School Fair, North Central Tech, Marshfield Clinic, and HCN Department of Health events. The Mavid Career Fair, Miron Job Fairs, and the Department of Wisconsin Workforce Development Breakfast, with various Workforce Development Divisions, were also key events. These opportunities provided valuable training and employment prospects, particularly in the construction sector. The staff actively engaged with businesses and community partners to facilitate potential job and training placements. Additionally, staff attended local events, including job fairs and block parties in HCG-BRF, Tomah Youth Center, Nekoosa, Madison, and the Homeless Connection Event at BRF Lunda. The Department also participated in the Wellness Extravaganza at Lunda Center in Black River Falls, Eau Claire County, and the Workforce Development Career Fair, broadening our outreach and connecting with potential clients and community organizations. Notably, two staff members represented the Department at the Ho-Chunk Nation Madison Summer Block Party, fostering meaningful connections to expand our service reach. Internal collaboration was enhanced through regular team meetings, including Labor Division updates, TWD Staff meetings, Tribal Labor Advisory Committee, WisDOT Tribal Affairs, Inter-Tribal Task Force, and the Workforce Development Workgroup. The team renewed and initiated partnerships with key organizations such as Lunda Construction, the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Chamber of Commerce, Jackson County.

Elder Worker Berna BigThunder-Hindsley

2. Accomplishments FY24/25 Goals and Strategies

The Department's progress reflected strategic priorities for FY24/25, with efforts directed toward workforce development, inclusive access, and strengthened collaborations. Renewed partnerships enabled industry-informed training opportunities, advancing the mission of preparing individuals for meaningful employment.

Milestones also included expanded cooperation with state vocational and workforce entities, underscoring a commitment to inclusivity by broadening opportunities for underrepresented groups. Community engagement and new organizational connections further reinforced the department's capacity to design responsive, partnership-driven workforce programs.

3. Problems and Corrective Actions

The Department encountered periods of reduced external engagement, underscoring the importance of sustained outreach and consistent communication. In response, adjustments were made to strengthen internal coordination, enhance partner collaboration, and incorporate flexible engagement methods.

A parallel focus on professional development ensured staff were equipped with advanced training and certifications, reinforcing the department's capacity to address client needs effectively while fostering resilience and long-term program impact.

4. Goals and Strategies for FY 2025/2026

Strengthen and expand partnerships with construction firms, technical colleges, and local businesses to increase training and employment opportunities for clients.

Enhance collaboration with organizations focused on inclusivity, including continued work with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, to serve individuals facing barriers to employment.

Develop and implement a comprehensive outreach and communication strategy to boost engagement at community events and webinars.

5. Funding Sources and Partnerships Utilized

The Department advanced financial sustainability by cultivating diverse funding streams through strengthened partnerships and collaborative ventures. Strategic engagement with industry, community organizations, and educational institutions created access to specialized training, shared resources, and cost-sharing opportunities. Ongoing exploration of grants and joint initiatives further reinforced the department's capacity to expand services and sustain workforce development efforts.

Department of Natural Resources

The Department of Natural Resources is responsible for managing, exercising stewardship, and applying sound conservation practices over all of the Nation's lands and its natural resources. The Forestry Division is responsible for managing tribal forests and forestry resources on Nation lands. The division is divided into Rural Forestry and Urban Forestry.

Rural Forestry protects and guides management of outlying forests. Urban Forestry provides oversight and management of trees situated in areas near housing, commercial and government structures, parks, and the powwow grounds on tribal lands

Kjetil Garvin identifying black ash trees

Urban Forestry's primary goal is to maximize the benefits of trees in urban Hoocąk community settings. The section's first objective is to complete a hazard tree inventory of Ho-Chunk housing communities, governmental buildings and recreational buildings. Identified hazards will be managed through removal or the pruning of tree defects. Secondary to protecting people and property is adding to the environmental benefits and aesthetics of community housing, governmental and recreational areas through the planting of trees.

The Wildlife Division is responsible for monitoring and enhancing habitat for native wildlife species on the Nation's lands. Currently the Wildlife Division is staffed by the Forestry Division Manager, Wildlife Biologist and Wildlife Technician. The Wildlife Division maintains connections with federal, state, and local organizations to better assist with and give guidance to their current projects, as well as receiving help with the Nations projects. The Wildlife Division develops educational opportunities for Ho-Chunk members. The Wildlife Division is also responsible for conducting wildlife surveys to identify which wildlife species are currently living within and utilizing resources on Hoocąk lands.

- Collected and turned into WI DNR 43 deer heads for CWD testing.
- Created two elk habitat openings in the Darst parcel and planted seed for elk forage in 2.5 miles of Wazee subdivision fire breaks.
- Participated in elk calf searches and collaring with WI DNR.
- Assisted state DNR with winter elk trapping to replace telemetry collars, install birth detectors and relocated elk with conflict issues.
- Collaborate with Goja Howaite Hi on summer education program. Staff led a project with the youth to monitor elk activity on a newly seeded habitat project.
- Hosted 3 Chronic Wasting Disease outreach meetings. Meetings were held at D1 Community Center, Wittenberg TAU and House of Wellness.
- Led a shagbark hickory seed collection program at the Whirling Thunder

property with youth from the Tomah youth center

- Established camera trap (game camera) survey in various sites to monitor wildlife using 60 plots, monitored for four months each. Data was analyzed for animal diversity.
- Did Hazard Tree/ Plant health assessments at numerous sites for tribal members and tribal entities.
- Wildlife staff participated in a wolf tracking & data collection training.
- Attended Statewide Elk Management Committee Meeting to provide input on elk management efforts within the state.
- Wildlife staff partnered with UW-Madison researcher on wolf research project. Project utilized trail cameras to monitor ability of wolves to break down deer carcasses. Research is being used to estimate the affect wolves have on slowing the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease.
- Staff surveyed roads in Jackson County for wolf tracks. Data was provided to WI DNR.
- The Land Management Division provides oversight, land management, and conservation practices for natural resources located on Nation rural properties. The Division also provides support to the Forestry and Wildlife Divisions for various project work completed on Ho-Chunk lands. The Divisions work closely with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) along with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to receive grant funding to support various project work. The Lands Division is also responsible for logistics and oversight of the HCN fire program.
- Prepped and completed prescribed burning on 448 acres on Badger, Shaw, and Kickapoo Valley Reserve burn units as a land management tool for prairie restoration projects.
- Secured Bureau of Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding to pay for the purchase of a new tractor that will be used to complete mowing and other land management practices.
- Fuel reduction and elk habitat work.
- Prepped and planted 150 acres of native prairie seed mix on the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Property.
- Continued work on the Wazee Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Firebreak Project to enhance safety of the expanding Wazee Subdivision/Community.

Canoe Trip on the Black River

Department of Personnel

The Department's mission states that it shall administer timely, equitable, and high-quality human resource services to the Ho-Chunk Nation and its employees. In doing so, the Department shall safeguard the interests of the Nation, enhance the sovereignty of the Nation, and exercise stewardship over those resources committed to it by the Nation and foreign jurisdictions.

The Department provides all human resource services to all of the Nation's government departments and business facilities. It is made of up of two divisions, Personnel Management and Insurance. Personnel Management oversees the Nation's human resource offices at each of the gaming sites. It also oversees the internal drug enforcement unit, as well as the Nation's Employee Assistance Program, which is outsourced. Insurance handles all of the Nation's employee and Ho-Chunk elder benefit plans, property and casualty, and worker's compensation plans.

The Department has continued working with the Infor team on implementing various system modules that have been purchased through Infor. Infor is the platform that is used to maintain all data electronically. Infor Global HR & Talent Management, Talent Acquisition, and Performance Management was implemented in the past fiscal year.

Human Resource Talent (HRT)

HRT went live on 09/22/2024. Global HR and Talent Management captures and maintains workforce information for employees. HRT fully encompasses the employment duration from talent acquisition/onboarding to off-boarding.

Talent Acquisition (TA)

The TA module went live on 4/7/2024 and is used for the hiring of an individual. Some of these functions include posting vacant positions, accepting electronic applications, setting up and conducting interviews, selecting a candidate, and completing all of the pre-boarding and onboarding functions.

A QR code was created which takes interested individuals directly to the external website where they can register for an account and apply for vacant positions with the Nation. Once a profile is created, it allows individuals to easily apply for any current or future positions easily. If you are interested in viewing the Nation's current job openings, you can scan the QR code below.

Nation's Job Opening

Performance Management (PM)

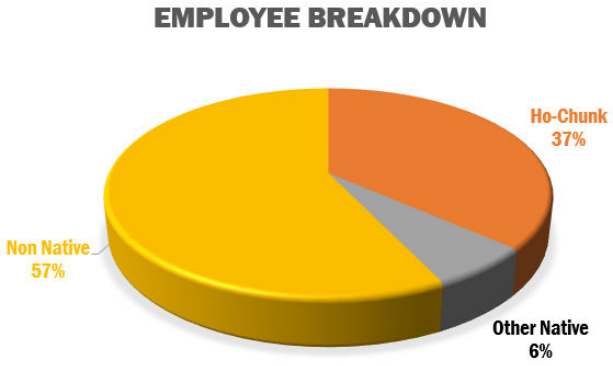
PM will replace all paper reviews. The term "appraisal" is what Infor uses rather than what Personnel previously referred to as a "performance evaluation." Appraisals will be completed in Infor by the supervisor and employee. To be able to implement this, every employee must have Ho-Chunk Nation e-mail and Infor employee self-service accounts.

<u>Classification & Compensation Plan</u>

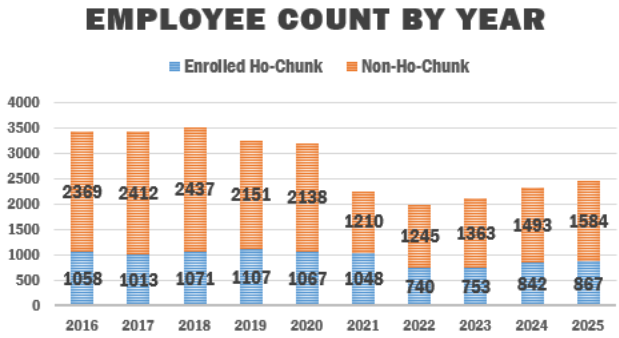
Personnel was tasked to work with Gallagher, a consultant firm, to complete a wage study. This study was completed and approved by the Ho-Chunk Nation Legislature. It went into effect at the beginning of 2025.

Personnel Summary

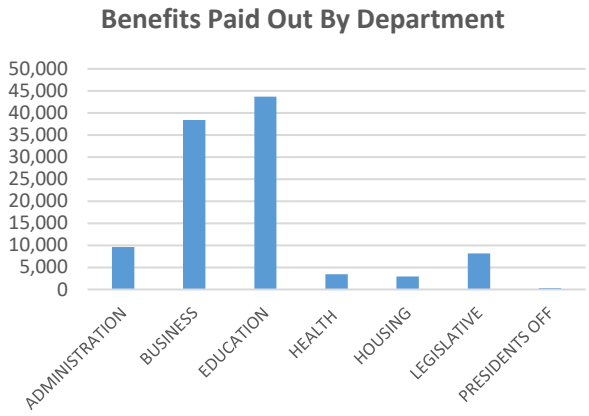
As of the end of the fiscal year, the Nation as a whole employed 2,495 individuals. Of these, 911 (37%) were enrolled Ho-Chunk members and 150 (6%) are members of other native nations. The Nation's governmental offices employed 978 employees. Of these, 519 (53%) were enrolled Ho-Chunk members. Additionally, the Nation's businesses employed 1,517 individuals. Of these, 392 (26%) were enrolled Ho-Chunk members.



The Nation's employee count has not reached the level of pre-Covid levels. However, the count continues to increase each year. Below is a chart showing the overall employee count by enrolled Ho-Chunk and non-Ho-Chunk employees.



There have been 291 different individuals who filed for unemployment benefits during the last fiscal year. Of these 45 were approved for benefits, 34 of which were automatically eligible for benefits due to being laid off. Eleven cases were approved benefits and 246 were denied benefits or did not follow through with claiming benefits.



Insurance Summary

- Amount total gross plan costs 7/1/2024 – 6/30/2025 for all plans (Elders, Tribal Employees, and Non-Tribal Employees): $60,950,684.
- Amount spent on Dental and Vision from 7/1/2024 – 6/30/25 for all plans (Elders, Tribal Employees, and Non-Tribal Employees): $2,592,423.
- Average Enrollment
  - Elder Plan = 1059
  - Tribal Plan = 630
  - Non-Tribal Plans = 1074
- 401K Plan (Ascensus Retirement Services) As of 7/17/25
  - Number of Participants with Balances: 2213
  - Total Participant Balance: $87,733,978
  - Average Participant Balance: $37,385
  - Loan Balance: $3,268,982 with 608 active Loans

Department of Social Services

Child Support Agency

Child Support Agency collected $679,615.06 from July, 2024-June 2025.

Independent Living Facility

Serving Ho-Chunk elders age 55 and older, the Independent Living Facility (ILF) has maintained full occupancy at various points, providing residents with a safe, independent environment in line with its mission. The facility promotes healthy living through regular chair exercises and outdoor walks with HCN's exercise physiologist, and it benefits from the collaboration of Social Services divisions and other departments to keep the building in excellent condition. Monthly Clan Mother Luncheons offer cultural teachings, stories, and life lessons, with semi-annual meetings held at ILF to share wisdom and strengthen community ties.

Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Division was awarded almost $1.3 million for October, 2024 – September, 2027. They worked with the Community Supportive Services Division to create the first tribal Coordinated Entry Coalition in the State of Wisconsin to address homelessness of tribal members and victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. A full functioning coalition is expected to be officially approved by the State of Wisconsin in November of this year.

Drummers host headstart graduation

Child Care Division

The Child Care Division operates two Naagu Pii tribally-operated center locations. The one-year olds are starting to say their first words in Ho-Chunk to their family members. The CDF grant funded $126,257.41 to assist tribal members with daycare expenses.

Youth Services

Youth Services special efforts included working with the Education Department's Tutoring Services Division in after school and summer programming, as well as a back pack collaboration for school supplies. 26 youth attended the 2025 UNITY Conference in San Diego, California.

Youth at Deer Hide Tanning Event

Child and Family Services Division

The Division continues to enhance the prevention and protective work with families and individuals of the Ho-Chunk

communities in development of providing safe and non-judgmental services for healing and wellness for future generations. The Department received an award from the State of WI Department of Children Families First Program- Putting Families First. CFS received $976,216.66 in reimbursement funds to support the NPD Budget.

- CFS received 1,264 total intakes from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.
- CFS served 405 adults/elders through the Adult and Elder Protection Program, Tribal Memory Care Program and Tribal Aging and Disability Resource Specialist Program.
- CFS served 1,669 children. Of those 1,669 children, 961 of the children were enrolled or eligible for enrollment with the Ho-Chunk Nation. ICW intake processed 354 children that were under the blood quantum threshold, thus not eligible for CFS to intervene in the County case.
- CFS Child Welfare Program only filed two Tribal Court Child In Need of Protection petitions. One of the actions filed was for an in-home protective action and the other was a removal of children.
- Two hundred twenty-one gifts/gift cards provided through Hocak Woga in December for children receiving services from CFS.
- CFS was a lead on the coordination and financing of the 2024 Family Healing Camp, which averaged 450 participants during the event.
- Bill Boards and Commercials aired that featured Ho-Chunk Nation staff and recipients of service from the Aging and Disability Resource Specialist.
- CFS hosted the Family Holiday Healing Event in December 2024, of which there were 115 participants.
- CFS received $976,216.66 in funds from other agencies to supplement the NPD budget allocated.
- the State of WI Department of Children Families First Program- Putting Families First. CFS received $976,216.66 in reimbursement funds to support the NPD Budget.

Grand Opening of Waagax Hakiruxaraxara Hosto – HCN Library – D1CC

Department of Treasury

The Department provides support to all branches of government, to include departments, programs, and enterprises. Services provided by Treasury include: finance, internal financial reporting, accounting, facilitating the annual audit, tax reporting, tribal loans, vendor check processing, monthly General Welfare check distribution, weekly payroll processing, mortgage maintenance, and monitoring of grant program compliance and grant fiscal reporting.

Accomplishments:

In FY25, Treasury devoted time with the Trust & Investment Commission reviewing the investment processes and procedures to streamline reviews and decision making, not because there were any problems or issues with current policy, but to make future tactical decisions more goal oriented and expedient. Practically, this involved a thorough review of the four Investment Policy Statements currently in use and providing recommendations to the Finance Commission on next steps.

FY 2024-2025 Treasury Fun Facts *(Fun if you are an accountant)*

Front Desk FY25:

- In/Out total of 2,705 documents
- 5,878 total calls
- The following was returned mail:
  - 5,425 Tribal General Welfare Direct Deposits
  - 5,878 Tribal General Welfare Checks
  - 2,033 Payroll Direct Deposits
  - 13 total returned Payroll Checks
  - 42 total Accounts Payable checks
  - 54 total 1099-misc returns
- Tribal employee loans:
  - 484 total applications received
  - 45 total applications denied due to arrearages owed to the Nation
  - 5 total applications denied due to a missing notary stamp, an incorrect name or addresses that are different with either Enrollment or Personnel or both
  - Processed applications totaled $1,167,964
  - The total balance of outstanding tribal employee loans is $2,815,980
- 287 total Processed Income Verifications for tribal members
- 389 RapidPay Replacement cards issued

Accounting FY25:

- Accounts Payable Total of 29,295 checks in the amount of $240,655,187
- Prior Fiscal Year Total of 26,137 checks in the amount of $141,861,242
- Processed 159 Elite Elder tax payments for a total amount of $414,104
- 2,310 Income Statement Accounts (revenues and expenses) reviewed and audited for discrepancies

Grant Division FY25:

- Total awards totaled $46,491,942
- Total Federal and state expenditures were $29,483,267
- Total awarded budget balance remaining to be expended totaled $5,253,952

Credit Cards/Advance Travel FY25:

Advance Travel processed:

- 964 travel arrangements for employees
- 40 arrangements for the NCAI Youth Trip
- Credit Card purchases:
  - US Bank purchase credit card charges $2,191,846
  - Voyager Fuel credit card charges: $377,865
  - Travel credit card charges: $889,621

Payroll FY25:

- Total number of checks printed: 432
- Total number of direct deposits: 129,519
- Total Gross Payroll: $123,191,328

Taxes/General Welfare:

- Issued 3,419 W2 wage tax forms
- Issued 72,982 Adult General Welfare payments/Total amounts: $73,180,000
- Issued 16,311 Minor General Welfare payments/Total amounts: $16,312,000
- Grand total of General Welfare payments was $89,492,000

Goals and strategies:

First, complete the Investment Policy Statement. Second, discuss and amend the Children's Trust Fund distribution policy. The Trust & Investment Commission has identified two challenges: the immense social pressures of a young adult receiving their entire distribution at once; and the enormous tax consequences put into a single year's return when receiving their Trust fund.

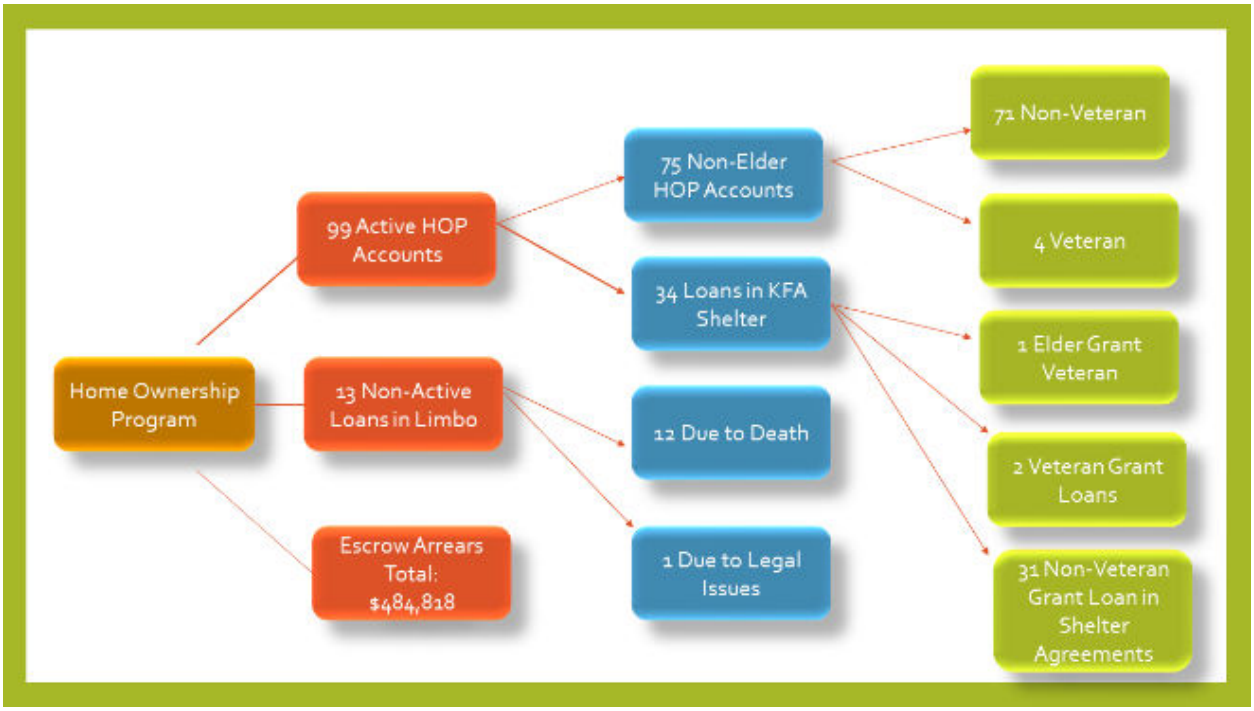
By staggering distributions over several years, the net result may be significantly more trust assets ending up into our member's accounts, rather than the IRS'.

Third, align assets to the best investment strategies and provide further clarity on assets available and more accurately compare how the investments and risks are performing.

INFOR Goals and Strategies:

Expand training efforts in Financial Reporting, especially for leadership, once Fiscal Year End processes conclude.

- Responsive Treasury Support
- Workforce Flexibility
- System Testing Protocol



HO-CHUNK NATION LEGISLATORS

District 1


Phyllis Smoke


Paul Fox

District 2


Stephanie Begay


Damian ThunderCloud


Kyle WhiteEagle

District 3


VP-Lambert Cleveland


Sarah Lemieux-WhiteEagle


Shelby Visintin

District 4


David Greendeer


Sandra WhiteWing


Matt Mullin

Legislative Branch

The Ho-Chunk Nation Legislature is the elected voice of the people, working to pass laws, oversee budgets, and hold government accountable. Twelve Representatives from four districts work together to protect the Nation's sovereignty and advance the well-being of the Ho-Chunk people.

Over the last year, the Legislature focused on strengthening our economy, improving infrastructure, supporting community health, and preserving and advancing culture. It met regularly in open and special sessions, often partnering with the Executive Branch and its departments to move important initiatives forward.

This report shares the key accomplishments, priorities, and challenges the Legislature addressed over the past year. It reflects the dedication of the representatives, staff, and citizens in building a strong, sustainable future rooted in sovereignty, service, and tradition.

President Jon Greendeer and Reps. Lambert Cleveland Jr., Stephanie Begay, and David Greendeer speak with Governor Evers

Accomplishments:
Initiatives advanced food security, language preservation, housing, cultural programming, and community wellness, laying the groundwork for projects to be carried forward.

Partnered with UW-Madison to Strengthen Food Systems
Worked with UW–Madison to pursue state agriculture grants aimed at enhancing Ho-Chunk Nation food programs, supporting local producers, developing a food processing facility, and improving access to healthy, culturally relevant foods for our communities.

Support Language Preservation:
Approved multiple measures to strengthen the Nation's Language Division, including authorizing applications for competitive funding such as the First Nations Development Institute's Native Language Immersion Initiative.

Honored Community Contributions:
Recognized Robert Mann for his dedication to the Ho-Chunk Nation Healing to Wellness Court and his service to surrounding communities. During the May 21, 2024 Legislative Session, the Legislature presented him with a citation and blanket in appreciation of his work. Earlier in the year, Robert Mann was awarded the HERO Award by the Wisconsin Association of Treatment Court Professionals.

Housing Development Opportunities:
Approved multiple measures to expand housing options and secure additional funding for community development. Examples include authorizing the Ho-Chunk Housing & Community Development Agency to apply for the Indian Housing Block Grant 2024 Competitive Grant Program (FR-6700-N-48), aimed at increasing access to safe, affordable housing for Ho-Chunk members.

Cultural Education and Documentation:
Authorized the Department of Education to apply for the Ruth Foundation for the Arts: Wisconsin Special Projects Grant, which provided funding for cultural learning opportunities. This support made it possible for the Gooja Howaite Hii Program to offer classes on making moccasins and to host community gatherings for traditional games such as lacrosse and double ball. The grant also funded the

filming and documentation of these events, allowing them to be enjoyed by the public.

The Legislature, along with President Greendeer, took part in the groundbreaking ceremony for Ho-Chunk Gaming Beloit.

Legislative Highlights

- **Beloit Casino Groundbreaking**
  Legislators recognized the official start of construction on the Ho-Chunk Gaming Beloit project, launching the Nation's largest-ever development project and solidifying long-term revenue growth.
- **Compact Amendment Signed with Wisconsin**
  Effective January 8, 2025, the Ho-Chunk Nation and State of Wisconsin finalized amendments to the Gaming Compact authorizing event wagering, remote wagering, updated exclusivity payment rules, and additional Class III facility locations. These changes expand gaming opportunities and strengthen revenue generation to support Nation programs and services.
- **Code Talkers Memorial Highway Unveiling**
  The Legislature helped dedicate Interstate 90 as the Ho-Chunk WWII Code Talkers Memorial Highway in partnership with Governor Tony Evers and WisDOT.

- **General Welfare Program Renewal**
  Approved funding for the General Welfare Restricted Account and authorized the 2025–2026 General Welfare Payment for all Ho-Chunk Nation adults and minors. These actions ensure continued financial support to tribal members, reinforcing the Nation's commitment to community well-being.
- **Southland Center Economic Development Review:**
  In January 2025, the Legislature voted to close operations at the Southland Center in Illinois, a move that reduces ongoing expenses for the Nation and opens the door for new economic development opportunities. This decision allows the property to be evaluated for ventures that can bring greater long-term value and benefit to the Ho-Chunk people.
- **Strengthening Youth Education through School Partnerships**
  The Legislature approved multiple initiatives to support the academic success of Ho-Chunk youth, bringing the total number of active Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with school districts to fourteen.
- **Cloud Village Groundbreaking**
  The Nation broke ground on Cloud Village, a 40-unit multifamily housing community designed to provide high-quality, affordable housing for Tribal Members and local families. Funded in part through Low Income Housing Tax Credits, the project includes seven supportive housing units for veterans, paired with wraparound services to promote

stability and wellness. Construction is expected to be completed in October 2025.

Funding Sources and Partnerships Utilized FY24/25

- **General Welfare Exclusion Assistance (GWEA) Program**
  By formalizing eligibility and renewal mechanisms for the GWEA Program, the Legislature preserved the Nation's ability to deliver tax-exempt assistance to members—leveraging IRS-recognized frameworks to avoid taxable income burdens.

Reps. Rodney Rave, Lambert Cleveland Jr., Damian Thundercloud, and Stephanie Begay at the 2025 MAST convention, Washington, D.C.

Legislative Priorities & Strategic Goals:

Economic Development & Tribal Sovereignty
- Advancement of Ho-Chunk Gaming Beloit
- Southland Center redevelopment planning
- Compact and land-based sovereignty efforts

Infrastructure & Connectivity
- Partnering with area broadband providers to provide internet to tribal members
- Utility and road planning for tribally held properties

Health, Housing & Community Well-Being
- General Welfare Program renewal
- Support for behavioral health and elder services

Government Transparency & Accountability
- Budgetary oversight
- Increased public reporting and meeting transparency

Cultural Preservation & Tribal Identity
- Code Talkers Highway dedication and veteran recognition
- Continued support for Ho-Chunk language programs

Youth & Workforce Empowerment
- Youth sports and work sponsorships
- Expanded support for summer employment and training

The Ho-Chunk Nation Legislature extends its deepest gratitude to all Ho-Chunk members for their continued engagement, trust, and support. The accomplishments in this report reflect our shared commitment to self-determination, community well-being, and the enduring strength of Ho-Chunk sovereignty. As the team enter a new fiscal year, the Legislature remains firmly rooted in cultural values and accountable leadership—guided by the needs of our people and the wisdom of our elders.

Judiciary Branch

The Judiciary Branch serves the Constitutional role of interpreting and applying Ho-Chunk Nation Law. Under the Ho-Chunk Nation Constitution, the Supreme law of the land, the Trial Court shall have original jurisdiction over all cases and controversies, both criminal and civil, in law or equity, arising under the Constitution, laws, customs, and traditions of the Ho-Chunk Nation.

In the COVID era, the Judiciary and justice system stakeholders had to transition from in-person to remote hearings, overcome technological and physical challenges. After significant staffing challenges for the past several years, the branch is looking forward to a new budget year and to positive changes and enhanced capacity in the year ahead. When adequate staffing levels return, it will be possible to engage in the tasks of data preservation, enhanced case management, information sharing and accurately monitor trends and case balances.

The Judiciary welcomed three new staff members in FY 24/25: two Assistant Court Clerks and a Maintenance Worker. An Assistant Court Clerk transitioned to the Wellness Court as its Case Manager.

SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court's mission statement derives from its constitutional responsibilities to:

1) Provide final appellate review for cases and controversies initiated in the executive administrative process or Trial Court;
2) Offer definitive interpretations of constitutional text and legislative enactments;
3) Promulgate procedural rules to guide the Judiciary; and,
4) Administer and oversee attorneys and lay advocates licensed to practice before the Nation's courts.

The Supreme Court bears the solemn responsibility of providing final binding constitutional interpretations. In performing this task, the Supreme Court definitively resolves significant controversies concerning the proper application of law to deep-rooted conflicts. The Supreme Court has dealt with nine cases during FY 24/25. The Supreme Court has continued operations remotely and reviewed the role of Information Technology in case decision issuances. It has provided direction regarding web page enhancement. The Supreme Court is responsible for a supervised bar admission examination for the Nation's Judicial system.

Goals and Strategies for the Next Fiscal Year

- Resolve appropriately filed appeals.
- Promulgate and revise judicial procedural rules as needed.
- Devise qualifications for legal practitioners and ensure adherence to associated ethical requirements.
- Providing an open and welcome research environment for practitioners and Ho-Chunk tribal members. Improvements include inclusion of the daily court calendar, the inclusion of additional Supreme Court case files and access to various forms;
- Consider the need to develop and implement Lay Advocate Rules, revise other rules such as the Rules of Civil Procedure, and Rules for Guardians ad Litem.

TRIAL COURT

The Ho-Chunk Nation Judiciary branch shall fairly, objectively and timely render justice as required by the Ho-Chunk Nation's laws in order to provide access to justice for our customers, internal and external.

The Trial Court has the power to issue all remedies in law and in equity including injunctive and declaratory relief and all writs. Additionally, the Trial Court may exercise its power to declare the laws of the Ho-Chunk Nation void if such laws are not in agreement with the Nation's Constitution.

In the period from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025, the number of new cases opened decreased from the previous fiscal year. Pre-pandemic the number of new cases were above 400. In FY 23/24 the number was 170 and new cases for FY 24/25 totaled 123.

Historically, the Trial Court has seen a significant decrease in the number of children's cases relating to abuse and neglect. The past year only seven such cases filed. HCN Child and Family Services (CFS) has informed the Court when a family fails the CFS Intervention Program, the case may be filed in a foreign jurisdiction as there are a number of alternative and diversion courts in surrounding counties for family situations.

Accomplishments

- Addressed significant personnel challenges by seeking to hire and fill vacancies.
- Scheduled Guardians ad Litem training, additional candidates are needed.
- Courthouse tours and education for youth, college students, and other jurisdictions, civic groups that are working with the Nation continued.
- Judicial presentations to various professional and agency groups regarding the courts. Wis. Supreme Court, Wisconsin Tribal Judges Association, University of Wisconsin Law School- Federal District Court, University of Wisconsin Law School Student, various bar presentations.
- New Hires are engaged in training and skills building on court specific software, and are preparing to move forward with improvements of technology as they become available.
- Ongoing file audit for the accuracy of the Court's records and as preparation for a case management solution.

Goals and Strategies for the Next Fiscal Year

- Review grant announcements for alternative funding sources.
- Review recommendations from BIA Court Assessment and implement as feasible; seek funding as available and necessary
- A new case management system will be implemented to increase accessibility to appropriate updated equipment and software for enhanced flexibility and mobility as part of emergency preparedness, and to facilitate the work of staff in a safe and professional, secure means and allow for data collection;
- The Court Calendar will be available electronically. Standardized packets of fillable forms and instructions, available electronically
- The webpage information relating to the Trial Court and Judiciary will continue to be reviewed with the goals to be more interactive and user friendly. Research and access to case decisions will be more readily available electronically through a variety of media resources for practitioners and lay persons alike;
- Lay Advocate training will be available in 2025 and 2026.
- Timeliness of the issuance of judicial decisions will continue to be addressed.
- Incorporate Ho-Chunk language & culture in Court decision-making and procedures.

HCN TRADITIONAL COURT

The Traditional Court plays an active role in providing knowledge of custom, traditions and Ho-Chunk core values to members referred to them by court processes and through social services programming, or via self-referral. They seek to preserve, protect and enhance the sovereignty of the Ho-Chunk Nation.

Accomplishments

- Peacemaking training/consult with Judges as educational advisor(s)
- Community outreach & education
- Cross-cultural exchange with engagement by Wisconsin Supreme Court and Wisconsin Tribal Judges Association.
- Completed a review of the process to fund cultural/religious site development.

- Continued to have a member as part of the Healing to Wellness Court team.
- Consulted with Legislature on Codes
- Community Outreach & education, participation in various meetings and gatherings.
- Engaged families in need of services and education regarding cultural matters, provided clan information, explained obligations and roles of young Ho-Chunk men.
- Arranged to participate in the 2025 Family Healing Camp.

Traditional Court Goals and Strategies for the Next Fiscal Year:

- Greater Interaction and training with the Trial & Supreme Court.
- Continue to consult on legislation as requested for Federal and State levels.
- Continue to be available to Tribal Executive & Legislative branches for consultation, documentation of decisions.
- Promoting use of Traditional Courts to resolve disputes.
- Participation in youth and Wellness Court consultations as requested.
- Consider the establishment of cultural and traditional awareness opportunities for members of the community.
- Collaborate with justice system partners to incorporate traditional components in alternative and diversionary programming.

WELLNESS COURT

The Ho-Chunk Nation Tribal Wellness Court exists to address a pervasive ill affecting our community - alcohol and drug addiction and its associated consequences. New this year is the expansion to be able to serve tribal members and their household members, and other tribal members outside of the Jackson County, WI area due to Legislative action to address the ongoing issues of substance use within our communities. The Tribal Wellness Court will act in partnership with tribal and community agencies and service providers to achieve the following goals.

1. Create support systems and programs to foster employment, education, communal, familial, and individual health and well-being,
2. Maintain relationships and resources to continually assist program participation;
3. Restore traditional values and language,
4. Outreach to the tribal membership and other eligible participants via multiple media regarding the Healing to Wellness Court,
5. Outreach to collaborative partners in other WATCP member courts or tribal courts providing culturally relevant services and sharing knowledge regarding available resources and contacts.

The Judiciary branch would like to take the opportunity to thank the staff of the branch for their dedicated service to the Nation, the traditional court members and all those partners who contribute to the operations of the various courts. This Court is a Ho-Chunk Court. This is your court as Ho-Chunk members. Please contribute in the upcoming effort of strategic planning so that the Judiciary can reflect the needs and community goals as it performs its Constitutionally delegated tasks.

HHCDA

Accomplishments

- Community and Recreational Projects
  - Sand Pillow All-Abilities Park
  - IHP 2024 Projects
  - Madison Area Playground
  - Wittenberg Pavilion
- Major Housing Projects
  - Family Supportive Housing Structure is complete, and preparations for opening are underway. This project will provide stability and wrap-around support for families in need.
  - Winnebago Heights IHBG Competitive Project (FY23 award) – $5.2 million to construct 17 new homes. Construction to begin in 2026.
  - Dane and Lacrosse County IHBG Competitive Project (FY24 award) – $ 6 million for land acquisition funded to support future duplex construction for low-income tribal families.
- Organizational Growth and Leadership
  - Welcomed new Board of Commissioners members and a new Executive Director, strengthening governance and strategic oversight.
  - Staff expansion across multiple departments increased operational capacity.
  - Initiated a comprehensive program and department review to align initiatives with current tenant and tribal member needs, modernizing services while maintaining momentum.

Supportive Services Summary

- Metro Rent & Rental Assistance: $177,640 total; 32 households served including elders, veterans, and homeless/disabled members.
- Rental Assistance (standard): $30,385 issued to 32 households across multiple counties.
- Post-Secondary Housing Assistance: $53,825 provided to 28 students across 15 counties in 9 states.
- Homeownership & Down Payment Assistance: 9 families assisted; total $81,148; primary service areas in WI and MN.
- Tenant Services: 182 applications received; 47 approved.

Strategic Goals:

- Enhance Communication and Transparency
- Housing and Infrastructure Solutions
- Improve Housing Quality
- Promote Sustainability and Community Development

Problems Encountered and Corrective Actions Taken

- Project Scheduling & Material Delays
  - Some rehabilitation and park planning phases were delayed due to supply chain and weather impacts.
  - Corrective Action: Adjusted procurement schedules and prioritized projects with highest community use.
- Communication Gaps:
  - Some community members were initially unaware of project progress.
  - Corrective Action: Expanded outreach through flyers, social media, and in-person meetings.

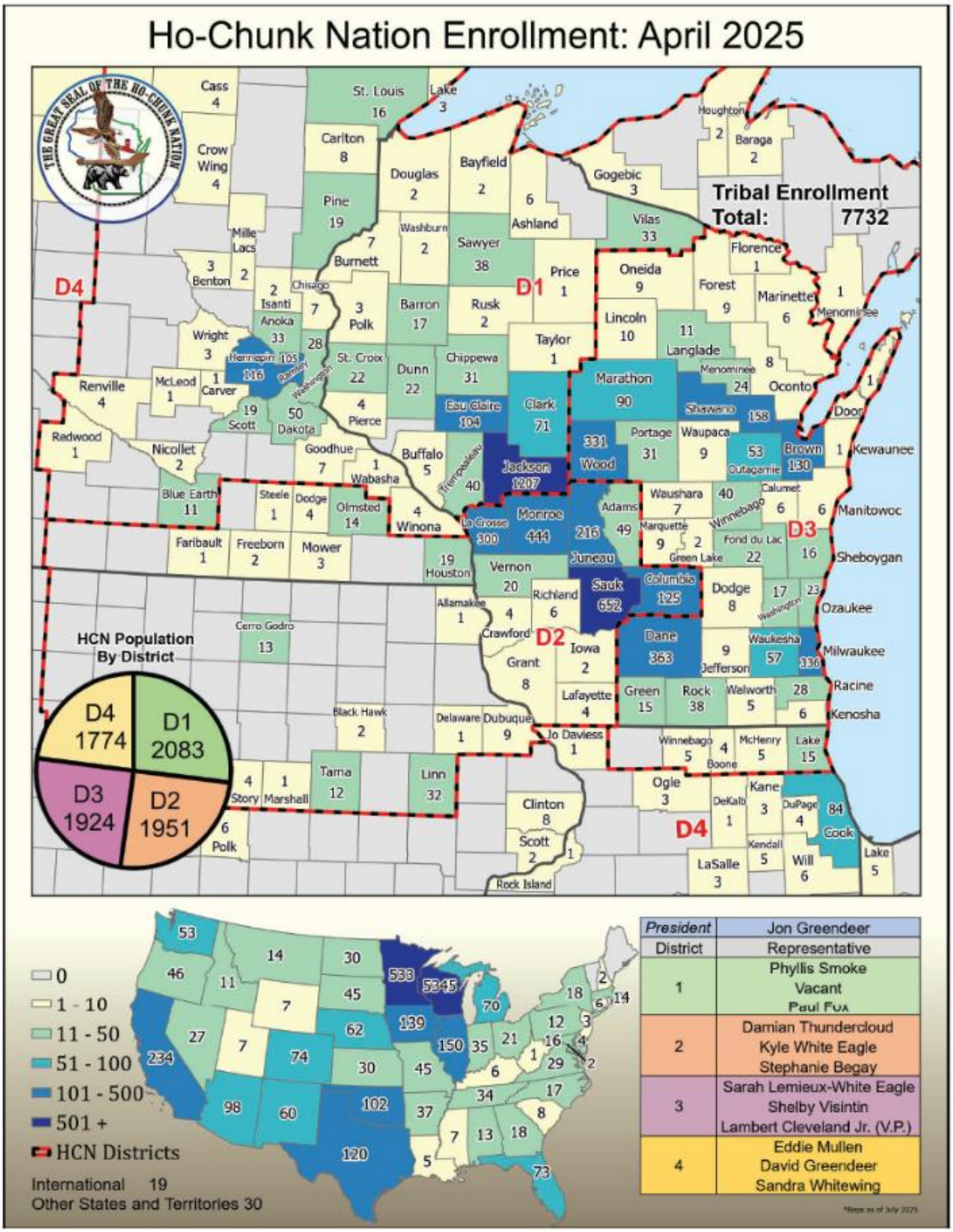
Goals and Strategies:

- Housing Development at Winnebago Heights, Construction to begin in 2026.
- Dane and La Crosse Counties – Begin listening sessions and community needs assessments to guide future IHBG projects.
- Expand tenant community engagement and district outreach through listening sessions

and surveys to ensure IHP projects meet family needs.

Continue integrating feedback from all four districts into housing and community planning.

Alternative Funding Sources and Partnerships Utilized or Explored		
Grant / Program	Award Amount	Purpose
IHBG Competitive FY24 – Dane & La Crosse Counties	$6,000,000	Land acquisition and construction of 6 duplexes (12 units) for low-income families
IHBG Competitive FY23 – Winnebago Heights	$5,202,739	Construction of 11 new housing units on HHCDA lots
NAAF (Native American Agriculture Fund)	$200,000	Renovate CRTC kitchen to commercial grade; workforce training
US Bank Grant	$300,000	Playground & family therapy equipment; staff position support
Tribal Home Electrification Program	$993,614	Provide energy-efficient appliances to low-income households
St. Dunstan's Episcopal Grant	$30,000	Furnish 10 Family Supportive Housing units
First Nations Development Institute	$10,000	Furnishings, community training, raised beds, elder stipends
WHEDA – Winnebago Heights Elder Housing	$50,000	Replace windows & exterior doors for elder units
USDA Rural Development – High Energy Cost Grant 2025 PENDING	$3,000,000	Solar upgrades, battery storage, workforce training


Ho-Chunk Nation Enrollment: April 2025
Tribal Enrollment Total: 7732
D1
D2
D3
D4
HCN Population By District
D4 1774
D1 2083
D3 1924
D2 1951
0
1 - 10
11 - 50
51 - 100
101 - 500
501 +
HCN Districts
International 19
Other States and Territories 30
President Jon Greendeer
District Representative
1 Phyllis Smoke, Vacant, Paul Fox
2 Damian Thundercloud, Kyle White Eagle, Stephanie Begay
3 Sarah Lemieux-White Eagle, Shelby Visintin, Lambert Cleveland Jr. (V.P.)
4 Eddie Mullen, David Greendeer, Sandra Whitewing

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