



NATIVE

oklahoma

MAGAZINE

APRIL 2023

CREDITS

NATIVE *oklahoma* MAGAZINE

NATIVE OKLAHOMA MAGAZINE | APRIL 2023

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NATIVE OKLAHOMA MAGAZINE is a monthly publication provides content from the Native community. For more information, to sell on our shop or to advertise, please call Adam Proctor at 918-409-7252 or email adam@nativeoklahoma.us

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NATIVE *oklahoma* MAGAZINE

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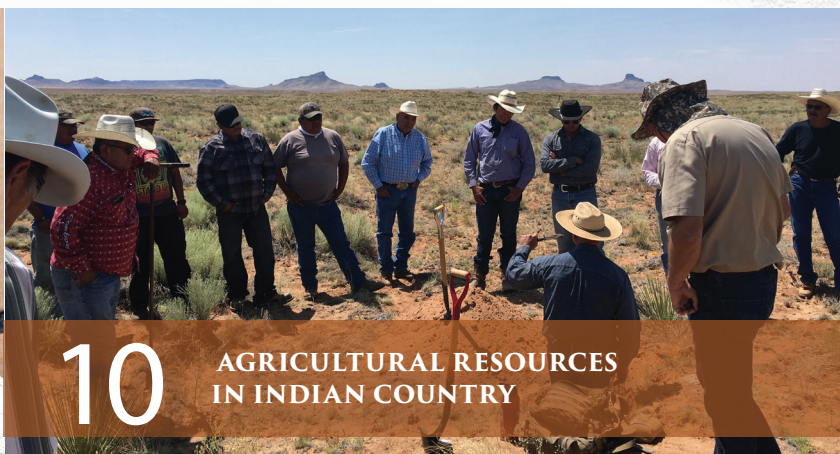


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Adequate Housing Can Sustain Culture and Address Homelessness

By: Nora Sovo

Underlying housing disparities have impacted tribal communities across the nation, leading to high rates of homelessness, displacement and generational divides. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development reported that Native Americans are overrepresented in the national homeless population. While homelessness in the tribal context often refers to living with family or friends instead of living on the street, it is one of the root causes of overcrowded living conditions.

Poor living conditions can increase the likelihood of tribal members moving away from their tribal communities in search of adequate housing. Since many tribal nations lack the necessary resources to prevent this from occurring due to limited funding, it poses a great risk to their culture's strength and longevity between generations.

To break the cycle of housing instability, homelessness and culture gaps, adequate housing and supportive resources hold the key. The Comanche Nation Housing Authority (CNHA) has recognized this growing issue and has strategically implemented several programs to prioritize Elders and assist enrolled members with housing.

CNHA offers assistance through its rental program, student housing program, homeownership lease purchase program, home improvement program, elder home rehabilitation program, elder outreach program and down payment and closing cost grant program.

"Housing affects many aspects of life. If we can improve housing for our tribal members, we can help them improve their overall quality of life," said Russell Sossamon, executive director of CNHA. "The majority of our programs are in place to combat homelessness, displacement and overcrowding. Our team is focused on strengthening our community through housing assistance to promote longevity for generations to come."

Serving more than 2,000 Comanche Nation members last year, one recipient credits CNHA's student program for helping him through his journey with homelessness. "CNHA not only supported me through college, but they helped me get on my feet at a time where I was homeless, staying on friends' couches and struggling to figure things out," said Major Pewenofkit.

Since the majority of our programs are dependent upon funding, we strive to prioritize the programs that serve those with the greatest needs and benefit the community as a whole, specifically our Elder programs. "Prioritizing Elders is one of the greatest ways to directly strengthen our culture and ensure persistency," said Sossamon.

Last year, the Elder programs reached a record amount of tribal members, supporting more than 1,400 Elders. "Our housing authority has made my house truly feel like home. Knowing that I have a safe roof over my head and access to reliable resources, gives me the assurance I need to focus on other areas of life," said an Elder of Comanche Nation and previous recipient of CNHA's Elder Program.

As servants to the Comanche Nation, CNHA's initiatives seek to better the lives of fellow tribal members and address the issues that pose the greatest threat to the community. We currently serve seven counties, including Caddo, Comanche, Cotton, Kiowa, Tillman for federal grant programs and in Stephens and Grady for the elder and home improvement programs.

To learn more about CNHA's housing initiatives, call 580-357-4956 or visit www.comanchehousing.com





MUSCOGEE TRIBAL MEMBER CRAIG VAUGHAN AWARDED BEST BLUES BAND

Craig Vaughan and the Hammbone Blues Band have been named Best Group for 2022 in the annual Blues Choice Awards presented by the Blues Society of Tulsa. The award was celebrated March 18 at the Centennial Lounge at VFW Post 577, Tulsa, where the band received their plaques before performing a 90-minute set before a packed house.

While the band was formed less than three years ago, its members are veteran musicians. A member of The

Muscogee Nation, Craig is originally from Moore, OK, but now resides in Glenpool. He began performing with the Butch Powell Band in 1996, an all Native American blues band in Tulsa. Craig mentioned his experience with this group, "The Butch Powell band, which was very empowering. Everyone was experienced but me. Which made it easy for me to learn."

A few changes were made to that lineup that led to the formation of the Seneca Blues Band. Then, around 2010, Craig launched his own band with drummer John Hoff (Freddie King) and bassist Merle Baxter.

The Hammbone Blues Band was started on May 29, 2021. The formation of this band is a dedication to the late Harley Hamm of Muskogee. A great guitarist/singer whose life ended way too soon.

The Group performed at the Oklahoma Blues Hall of Fame in 2022 when band member and saxophonist David Carr Jr. was inducted. Other band members are Homer Johnson (rhythm guitar), Boo Williams (bass guitar), Joe



Modica (organ) and Bronko Carr (drums) all who have been previously inducted into the Oklahoma Blues Hall of Fame.

Vaughan expressed his thoughts on his musical journey. "Playing music with a band or even just a pickup band is like being in a family. you're learning, growing, developing, and teaching all in the same sense of your cultural heritage."

The Blues Society of Tulsa is a 501 c3 nonprofit dedicated to promoting the blues genre as well the artists who perform it. As part of the Blues Choice Awards, the Blues Society also celebrated its 21st anniversary.

Winner of the Blues Choice Awards are the result of voting by members of the Blues Society.

Other winners at the event were: Jennifer Marriott, Best Vocal; Pete Marriott, Best Lead (guitar); and Matt Teegarden, Best Rhythm (drums). The Jennifer Marriott Band was the opening group. Receiving the Morrow-Webster Lifetime Achievement Award for the years of supporting live music and the local and region artist that create it were Kevin Smith and Amy Addington Smith of Maggie's Music Box, Jenks.

Photos by Renae Tatt

Image 1 – Craig Vaughan with his Blues Choice Award for Best Band in 2022.

Image 2 – Craig Vaughan and David Carr on tenor sax.

Image 3 – Craig Vaughan, Bronko Carr and David Carr.

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SOUR SOFKEE

FIXICO DECLARES JIHAD ON LIBRARIES

By Fus Yvhikv

The doors crash open. Everybody in the library immediately swivels their head toward the front door. Fixico struts in. He is wearing a black turban, dark sunglasses, a sequined red dress that falls to mid-thigh, and glossy black, knee-high stripper boots.

His face is adorned with ruby red lipstick and makeup that is Crisco shortening white. His red lipstick is smeared out and away from the corners of his mouth. Fixico's appearance is a garish mashup of a Muslim Ayatollah and a drag queen with the dystopian smile of The Joker.

"Who are you?" a librarian timidly asks.

Fixico reaches into his clutch and pulls out a tarnished copper badge. He waves it up high.

"I'm with the censorship police! I'm here under the authority of the Oklahoma Secretary of Education. I'm here to rid this library of objectionable materials and sexualized content. I'm here on a mission from Allah!" Fixico announces as he holds the badge outward in a Nazi salute.

"So you are here to ban books in our collection?" the librarian asks.

"I'm here to eliminate wokeness in this library. I love the smell of wokeness in the morning. It smells like victory. Onward Christian Soldiers," Fixico says as he goosesteps across the lobby.

The librarian and the patrons lean away from Fixico as he marches through the library searching for objectional materials. He approaches my carrel desk.

"Fixico," I whisper. "What the hell are you doing?"

Fixico recognizes me and grins widely. His discolored teeth stand in stark contrast to his cotton ball white makeup. He leans in near to me even as I cautiously lean away from him.

"Don't be scared," he says. "I'm here undercover. I'm an agent provoker."

"You mean you are an Agent Provocateur. Somebody who provokes a situation," I reply.

"That's what I said. The American Library Association sent me. I'm supposed to provoke a scene to bring awareness of the censorship efforts of the white wing kkkonservative republicans."

With his Taliban turban, drag queen attire, and creepy Joker's smile, I was afraid. Very afraid. Still, I manage to respond.

"Ok," I say. "But what's up with the drag queen look?"

"What's wrong with you?" Fixico responds. "Don't you know that today is drag queen story hour? As soon as I do my job, I'm going to indoctrinate the kids and their impressionable minds."

As usual, it is impossible to argue with Fixico's ill logic.

"Yeah, I thought I would start by reading Gender Queer to the kids. Then I'll read a couple of pages from This Book is Gay. I'll wrap it up with a passage from the Quran," Fixico says.

"The Quran?" I ask. "Seriously? The white wingers might possibly forgive you reading LGBTQ literature to kids. But the Quran? They will burn you at the stake for that!"

"I told you I am here to cause a scene. People are supposed to think I'm a kkkonservative kkkristian declaring jihad on libraries and their efforts to indoctrinate our kids with liberal wokeness. I'll tell everyone I am here on orders from Ayatollah Ryan Walters, Oklahoma's Secretary of Education. Make America Hate Again is our motto," Fixico says grinning.

"While I admire your unconventional stand against censorship, and your willingness to create a scene for the cause, have you given any thought to your exit strategy?" I ask.

"Exit strategy?" Fixico says.

"Yes. Exit strategy. I'm not sure who is going to want to hang you the most. The librarians, the kkkonservative white wingers, the Muslims, or the drag queens," I reply.

"Well, if I stand for anything, it is equal opportunity," Fixico responds.

"Just the same, I'm going to get my car. I'll be waiting for you in the alley out back," I say. As I walk out, I notice a gaggle of queens. They are eyeballing Fixico suspiciously. Fixico doesn't see them.

"Proud Girls! Drag Queens for Trump!" Fixico screams.

The queens angrily rush toward Fixico. Their approach is slowed by their 6" stilettos. Fixico desperately tries to run away from the queens but his pace is hindered by the stripper boots.

A group of Proud Boys suddenly appear carrying stacks of books they deem objectionable. The Proud Girls forget about Fixico and surround the Proud Boys. A melee ensues as the Boys and Girls mix it up. The confrontation goes viral as library patrons live stream the fight.

The Girls weaponize their stilettos as they beat the not-so-Proud Boys into a hasty retreat. The Boys drop the books and quickly exit out a side door. The library patrons whoop, whistle, and applaud The Girls for defeating the censors. An impromptu drag show breaks out as The Girls parade through the library. Fixico gives each girl a high five as he joins the jubilant parade. He does the Fixico Strut as he holds the Proud Boys flag upside down.



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Agricultural Resources in Indian Country

The Intertribal Agriculture Council is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization established in 1987 to pursue and promote the conservation, development, and use of land-based agricultural resources vital to the economic and social well-being of Native American and Alaska Native Tribes. Since its founding, IAC has actively supported Tribal producers nationwide through comprehensive programs, which include: a national Technical Assistance Network; a Natural Resources program that conducts in-field trainings and services; the American Indian Foods (AIF) that provides market access support; and a Native youth and young professionals program that provides opportunities for the next generation of Tribal producers.

IAC's Technical Assistance (TA) Network directly assists Tribal producers with navigating USDA programs and accessing agriculture, land management, and community development resources. The IAC Natural Resources program expands on these resource offerings to offer conservation and land stewardship tools in collaboration with the NRCS. In the last five years, IAC's TA Network has provided outreach and assistance to nearly 300 Tribal communities, logging over 17,000 technical assistance interactions last year alone.

Another way that IAC directly supports Tribal producers is through IAC's American Indian Foods (AIF) program, which offers Tribal producers and entrepreneurs opportunities to promote their products in the global market while increasing equitable value chains that uplift the Indigenous food systems. Developed in 1998, AIF offers opportunities and resource support for businesses through every phase of market and export expansion. As part of the program, Tribal producers can apply for the Made/Produced by American Indians trademark created to protect the authenticity of Native products while increasing the visibility of Native food products. AIF offers export resources, an international export program, and the "Native Food Connection," which creates new domestic market opportunities and public awareness of Tribal producers enrolled in the program.

IAC also has a series of courses online and upcoming through 2023. These online courses are open to anyone and might be of interest to producers in Oklahoma. Meat to Market is a partnership between the Intertribal Agriculture Council and the Southwest Grassfed Livestock Alliance. Meat to Market is an extensive online business training for livestock producers all across Indian Country, encouraging them to embrace the possibility of direct marketing their meat and providing skills to do so.



Meat to Market will offer over 30 distinct courses as both individual trainings and modules of learning. Courses launched at the 2022 IAC Annual Conference and will continue as a webinar series through early 2024. Webinars are recorded live and uploaded to the IAC Mighty Networks e-learning platform as a free resource.

The project's design is grounded in a thorough needs assessment conducted in 2020-2021 in which we surveyed producers across the country to better understand challenges, missing capacity and skills, in order to discover positive pathways for deeper learning.

The curriculum will be centered around a series of webinars and accompanying tools & templates taught by a diverse set of educators, guest speakers, and producers from across all nations.

Our goal is to invite both existing and emerging producers to lean into the beauty and potential of their entrepreneurial endeavors despite what scale they produce at. Our style will emphasize storytelling, case studies, and anecdotal information from producers themselves alongside materials and methodologies from trusted experts across multiple sectors of livestock business operations.

To know more about this organization, or want to register as a member. Go to **www.indianag.org**



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Lane Factor Talks Reservation Dogs

Television's Breakthrough of Native American Representation

By Annabella Potts / Gaylord News

It will be another five months before the third season of the hit television series "Reservation Dogs," filmed in Oklahoma airs.

But the theme of bringing together classic Native American actors and young talent for Indigenous representation in the teen comedy and drama is set.

Oklahoman Lane Factor stars as 'Cheese' and takes part in a quest to California after the death of the fifth member of his teenage friend group. Full of adventures both criminal and comical, the series follows each member of the 'Rez Dogs' in their own paths of grief and growth.

Factor, who grew up in Midwest City, is a citizen of the Caddo Nation of Oklahoma and is also Creek and Seminole.

"Since the release of seasons one and two, there's been an increase in Native representation in the media and I couldn't be happier," Factor said during a telephone interview.

"People from Oklahoma have a lot of positive comments about it being filmed here, and they can relate to the adventures of the characters and the environment. It hits home to know the show is filmed here because many people see actors on the show that they personally know."

After the show took off, Factor and his co-stars won the 2022 Independent Spirit Award for best ensemble cast in a new scripted series. He has been a guest speaker for community events, youth conferences and schools across the state. He advocates across all tribes, extending his platform from the Caddo Nation to help other communities embrace themselves.

"It feels extra special being Seminole and portraying a Seminole teen," Factor said. "I want others of different communities and races to be proud of who they are. Embrace who you are and be proud of that."

Lane Factor's mom, Kelly Factor, is vice chairwoman of the Caddo Nation. As a tribally-elected official, she has paved the way for new opportunities and resources in the Caddo Nation and beyond. After the loss of cultural programs, understaffing of the tribal complex and lack of economic development with many tribal members unemployed, Kelly Factor said she stepped up to make a difference.

"Our nation is making a huge change and tackling these issues to improve all around, with funding coming back in, reestablished programs; language preservation; an economic development board; expanding land base; increasing tribal staff and cultural activities, to name a few," Kelly Factor said. "Our nation is a reflection of our families, our children and future generations to come. This is why it is imperative to make a change now."

As "Reservation Dogs" is made up only of Indigenous writers, directors and series regulars, the series stands as a turning point for Native Americans in the media.

With a clear lack of Indigenous representation in everyday television and feature films, Lane Factor's role stands for more than just a character on the screen.

"The majority of the Native population in our communities feel underrepresented, as well we should," Kelly Factor said.

"We don't see Natives playing in Native roles--these have been notoriously portrayed by non-indigenous actors. Our communities feel a sense of pride seeing actual Natives in these roles, and that it's possible to make it as a Native actor if they wanted."

Gaylord News is a reporting project of the University of Oklahoma Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication. For more stories by **Gaylord News** go to **GaylordNews.net**.

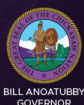
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Does overpaying on my mortgage really help?

By David Garcia, BOK Financial Native American mortgage services

As with most social media rumors—there’s a kernel of truth, blown a bit out of proportion.

Does overpaying cut your mortgage in half? No, but it does drastically save you money in interest and reduce the terms of your loan. There is validity to the rumor, but not to that extreme.

The total amount saved depends on the loan size and the original term, but the savings are apparent.

The first example, on the left, is a loan where the home owner never makes overpayments; right next to it is if the owner pays an additional \$300 per month. You can see the savings are significant from interest and term reduction.

How does it work?

Well, most mortgages are amortized loans. That means each payment has a scheduled amount that will go toward interest and a scheduled amount that will go toward the principal of the loan based on the original loan amount and interest rate.

There are numerous online calculators that allow you to enter your balance, length of the loan, and interest rate to see how your loan will post payments each month and how any additional money toward a reduction in principal will affect the length of the loan.

That’s not the only way, though.

Another way some people accomplish this is using a bi-weekly payment schedule. Using this method, half of the established monthly mortgage payment is applied to your mortgage every two weeks. This is also referred to as a budget payment plan and is well-suited for mortgage owners who get paid every two weeks. When a full payment is received, it will be posted to the loan. Going this route, a mortgage owner will make 13 payments in the course of a year, not the traditional 12. This approach, just like any additional funds posted to reduce the principal, lead to the loan being paid off earlier. To get the most out of this program, I would recommend calling your mortgage company to ensure the 13th payment is posted as a principal reduction, not just a normal monthly payment.

So whether you use a bi-weekly payment program, additional principal payments each month of any amount above your normal payment amount, or periodic extra payments toward just principal, all will reduce the principal balance, reduce the amount of interest, and lead to the loan being paid off quicker.

| Investment Of Savings | | | Results At End of Second Loan | |
|------------------------------|--------------|--|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Additional Principal Payment | \$300 | | Interest Savings | \$135,115 |
| Number of Payments Reduced | 110 | | Increase in Net Worth | \$156,834 |
| New Loan Term | 20 yrs 10 mo | | | |

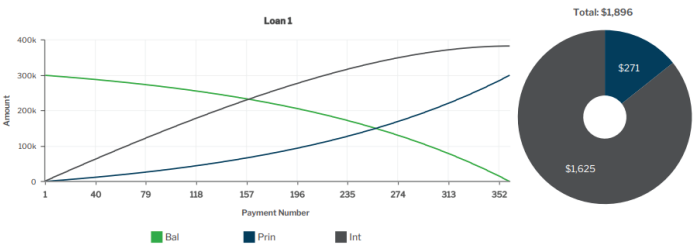
Estimated Summary

| | |
|------------------|-----------|
| Loan Amount: | \$300,000 |
| Num of Payments: | 360 |
| Annual Rate: | 6.500% |
| APR: | 6.5% |
| Monthly P & I: | \$1,896 |
| Total Paid: | \$682,633 |
| Total Interest: | \$382,633 |

Estimated Summary

| | |
|------------------|-----------|
| Loan Amount: | \$300,000 |
| Num of Payments: | 250 |
| Annual Rate: | 6.500% |
| APR: | 6.5% |
| Monthly P & I: | \$2,196 |
| Total Paid: | \$547,518 |
| Total Interest: | \$247,518 |

The additional monthly payment of 300 will result in an interest savings of \$135,115 and a net savings of \$156,834. The new loan term will be reduced by 110 payments of \$1,896.





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Sweeping across the center of the blanket is Wind, Mahli, bringing both the fluid curvatures of change and the sharp edges of the unexpected, an integral revival of ancient motifs of Chickasaw mound builders. Wind represents our life's journey; bringing the many changes we go through from the time of birth to the afterlife. It was said in the Chickasaw story of Wind, Aba' Binni'li' knew that eventually, young children would grow up, and the wind would bring this change to them. Mahli blows across the blanket to remind us that change will come, and resilience will always be the way of the Chickasaw people.



FCA Player Spotlight

Watie Byrd

Position: Forward

Height: 6-4

Weight: 225

Class: Sophomore

Hometown: Muldrow, Okla

High school: Muldrow HS

2021-22 - Reserve player for NSU and played in three games ... had four points and three rebounds at home against Haskell ... made his MIAA debut against Newman at home on Feb. 17.

High School - Played forward at Muldrow HS and helped guide the Bulldogs to a 20-5 record as a senior and was area runner-up ... named First Team All-Area in 2020 ...three-year letter winner.

Q & A with Watie

Favorite Bible Verse:

"Start a youth out on his way; even when he grows old he will not depart from it."

—Proverbs 22:6

Nickname: I've honestly have never had a nickname, just shortened to "Byrd"

Favorite food: Grilled Chicken Salad w/balsamic vinaigrette

Favorite Shoot Around Song: "Evidence" by Caleb Gordon

Favorite Player: Hakeem Olajuwon

Favorite Part of Being on a Team: Getting to be on a collegiate basketball team was what I said in 9th grade when we did this little team building exercise, Our coach asked us what our biggest dream was and I said to play college ball.

Who do you look up to: My uncle Joe Byrd

Plans after Graduation: Getting Masters Degree in Dietetics

What is your favorite part of being a student

athlete: "Using the platform to spread the Word of my Lord and what He has done in my life"

Favorite part of NSU FCA: being around other Christian athletes, it helps me realize that I am not the only one that is experiencing certain temptations in life

Who was your favorite Jr/Sr High Coach: Terry Collins

Coach Havens Comments:

"We are thankful for Watie Byrd and appreciate the de-meanor, work ethic, and attitude that he brings to our program. He is a great young man and comes from a great family. Watie understands and embraces the challenges of be-ing a student-athlete at the college level, and he represents NSU Men's Basketball in a positive manner on and off the court. He is an excellent student, he is involved and ac-tive in campus life and Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and he consistently gives of himself for the betterment of his teammates and fellow students."

Fellowship of Christian Athletes: we have a vision and mission and we need to be able to do the same as we live for Jesus! If you want more information about the FCA, please let me know.

FCA Vision. To see the world transformed by Jesus Christ through the influence of coaches and athletes.

FCA Mission

To lead every coach and athlete into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and His church.

"Jesus came near and said to them, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." —Matthew 28:18-20

John Morris is currently serving with Oklahoma Fellowship of Christian Athletes in Cher-okee, Adair and Delaware Counties and is supported financially by faith partners. If you are interested in more information on FCA or being a faith partner go to this link <https://my.fca.org/johnmorris>.

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5 Ways Entrepreneurs Can Use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to Elevate Their Business in 2023

As we step into 2023, it's clear that the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) is only growing stronger. In fact, many debate if AI will completely replace humans. The answer is no. Although AI may eliminate some tasks, systems still require human interaction and oversight.

For entrepreneurs looking to elevate their business, it's essential to consider the potential of AI.

From automating repetitive tasks to generating insights that drive growth, AI can offer a range of benefits for businesses of all sizes. In this article, we'll explore five ways entrepreneurs can leverage AI to take their business to new heights.

1. Enhancing customer experience through chatbots

One of the most significant areas where AI can help businesses is in customer service. With chatbots powered by natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning algorithms, businesses can provide 24/7 support to their customers. Chatbots can handle a range of tasks, from answering basic questions to scheduling appointments, freeing up human agents to focus on more complex issues.

Moreover, AI-powered chatbots can provide a personalized experience for customers. By analyzing customer data, chatbots can understand individual preferences and tailor their responses accordingly. This can help businesses build a stronger relationship with their customers, leading to increased loyalty and customer retention.

2. Optimizing marketing campaigns with predictive analytics

Marketing is another area where AI can be a game-changer. With predictive analytics, businesses can analyze customer behavior and predict their future actions. By using machine learning algorithms to identify patterns in customer data, businesses can tailor their marketing campaigns to specific customer segments, increasing the chances of conversion.

Moreover, AI can help businesses optimize their marketing spend. By analyzing customer data in real-time, businesses can adjust their marketing campaigns to maximize their return on investment (ROI).

3. Automating repetitive tasks with robotic process automation (RPA)

For many businesses, repetitive tasks can take up a significant amount of time and resources.

This is where robotic process automation (RPA) comes in. RPA uses AI-powered bots to automate tasks such as data entry, invoice processing, and customer onboarding.

By automating these tasks, businesses can increase efficiency and reduce errors, freeing up human employees to focus on more strategic initiatives. Moreover, RPA can help businesses scale their operations without having to hire additional employees.

4. Improving product recommendations with AI-powered recommendation engines

Product recommendations are an essential part of the customer experience for many

businesses. With AI-powered recommendation engines, businesses can provide personalized recommendations to their customers based on their past behavior.

By analyzing customer data, recommendation engines can identify patterns and make predictions about what products customers are likely to purchase next. This can lead to increased sales and customer satisfaction.

5. Enhancing cybersecurity with AI-powered threat detection

As cybersecurity threats become more sophisticated, businesses need to be proactive in protecting their data. AI-powered threat detection can help businesses stay ahead of the curve.

By using machine learning algorithms to analyze network traffic and detect anomalies, businesses can identify potential threats before they become a problem. Moreover, AI-powered threat detection can help businesses respond to incidents more quickly, minimizing the impact of any breaches.

As we've seen, AI can offer a range of benefits for businesses looking to elevate their operations in 2023. From enhancing customer experience to optimizing marketing campaigns and automating repetitive tasks, AI can help businesses increase efficiency, reduce costs, and drive growth. As AI technology continues to evolve, we can expect to see even more opportunities for entrepreneurs to leverage AI in the years to come.

If you'd like to learn more about systems automation or need business coaching, please visit:

<https://linktr.ee/luksiconsulting>



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CHICKASAW MAP II BLANKET

\$320

Originally painted on deerskin, The Chickasaw Map of 1723 is an important visual of Chickasaw history as it illustrates how the world was viewed by our ancestors. The map outlines in an artistic way, waterways, trade routes, and the relationships with other tribes at that time. Experiences and memory were depended on by the Chickasaw people who knew what lay beyond the southeast region, which was coveted by colonists who needed maps. The Chickasaw Map is credited to Fani' Minko' (Squirrel Leader or Squirrel King), a Chickasaw warrior and leader.



AICCO elevating Native Business Leadership in 2023

(OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla.) 38 federally recognized Indian nations are located within Oklahoma's borders, a state that's home to one of the largest Indigenous populations in the country. Through Leadership Native Oklahoma (LNO), an annual program put on by American Indian Chamber of Commerce of Oklahoma (AICCO), descendants from more than a dozen tribes will bring Native perspective to the forefront of business and leadership this spring and summer.

"AICCO is the largest and premier Chamber of Native and Minority-owned businesses spanning across the state," State Board President Bailey Walker said. "Our organization is committed to strengthening and advancing economic opportunity throughout Indian Country, and our annual LNO program plays a big role in laying that strong foundation."

The LNO program began back in 2016. More than 200 people from different professions, backgrounds, and political affiliations have gone through the program since. Tuition is just \$500 and costs are offset by program sponsorship.

A highly coveted class of 35 applicants were selected for the 2023 program. Class days will be held once a month this March through July for both Native and non-Native participants.

The first class of the year will be facilitated by the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma on March 27. Presenters will include Higher Education Director Regina Riley and Title VI Coordinator Patty Roe. Activities will include a tour of the Grey Snow Eagle House.

“Our chamber is working to reestablish the international trade routes of Indigenous peoples developed thousands of years ago,” Walker said. “The first step in achieving that goal begins right here in Indian Country.”

Walker said American Indian populations have unique values and needs that must be considered when planning for future generations.

He said LNO is a program that also equips business owners and other stakeholders in Indian Country with the tools and resources to succeed in the constantly evolving commerce and trade landscapes.

While applications are no longer being accepted for LNO’s Class of 2023, there is still a way for more businesses, organizations, and governments to be a part of the unique interactions and learning opportunities provided by LNO through class sponsorship.

Sponsorship options range from Wolf (\$1,000) to Eagle (\$7,500) and are accompanied by a variety of LNO promotional benefits. All sponsorship levels also include admittance to the LNO Graduation Banquet, a distinguished networking event with tribal leaders, state leaders, and participants.

“Regardless of whether you are a tribal leader, sponsor, or participant, the goal of the LNO Class of 2023 is the

same: to ensure a better future for Native Oklahoma,” Walker said. “LNO is furthering Native America’s role in business and leadership, and promoting high Indian Country standards for generations to come. We’re looking forward to LNO’s best year yet.”

AICCO is a non-profit organization AICCO that has advocated for the economic growth of Indian Country for more than 30 years. It was founded in the early 1990’s with a grant to the Indian Health Care Resource Center in Tulsa with the primary purpose of bringing Native business owners, tribes and resources together.

Its membership is currently more than 400 strong and growing, and includes Native and non-Native businesses and individuals as well as Native students.



To learn more about LNO programming and sponsorship opportunities, visit **<https://aicco.org/leadership-native-oklahoma/>**

For additional information, you may also email **chamber@AICCO.org** or call **918-624-9382**.



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cherokee.golf@cnet.com
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| Dress code | Bar/Grill | Pro-
shop | Banquet room

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