

## Welcome New MVO Task Force Member The National Native American Supplier Council

The National Native American Supplier Council (NNASC) is quickly making a name for itself as the only certifying body for tribally and indigenous owned businesses. NNASC certifies businesses that are Native owned and controlled in three distinct categories: individual, tribal, and tribal economic development corporation. The council was first established in early 2023 and already has members with more tribes expected to join in the coming months.

Executive Director Jason Palmer and his team estimate that they have already spoken to more than 100 tribes around the U.S. about potential membership. Palmer says there are 574 federally recognized tribes in the country. He plans to eventually connect with every one of those tribes about the opportunities the NNASC provides.

The council's mission is to empower its certified businesses by providing opportunities to connect, collaborate, and thrive. By serving as the certifying body for Native American owned businesses, the NNASC has a similar mission to the NVBDC, and plans to use some of the same successful strategies to build its brand.

Support for the council in less than a year has been "overwhelming" according to Palmer. He says that tribes and their citizens have had an issue promoting and getting recognition as a minority business enterprise for their Native American owned businesses for many years, and that he and a group of other tribal leaders from Michigan decided to act. Palmer is a member of the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians, better known as the Gun Lake Tribe in Michigan. The council has built a nationwide platform to help support members and the council's own controlled growth strategy.



"We (founded) the council because there was a long-term problem that required a resolution," Palmer says. NNASC has pro-actively spoken with organizations that represent collectives of Tribes, such as the Midwest Alliance

of Sovereign Tribes and United Tribes of Michigan. "There have been no issues or red flags raised that would prevent us from growing."

One message portrayed by the council is the importance of diversifying in various types of businesses, and where feasible, away from a gaming-focused approach, Palmer says. The Gun Lake Tribe for example has invested in several properties in Michigan cities like Detroit and Grand Rapids, and in farther away places like Texas. Part of Palmer's role is to educate others on the fact that Native American tribes are considered their own sovereign nations, giving them increased economic and social flexibility.

NVBDC and the MVO Task Force is a perfect fit for NNASC in part because Native Americans have a deep respect for veterans. Palmer says that historically Native Americans have served in branches of the U.S. Military at the highest per-capita involvement of any population.

"Both of my grandfathers served and there are many examples of how tribal members hold veterans in high regard," Palmer says, adding that many tribes have events for such purposes during the year.

Learn more by visiting [nnasc.org](https://nnasc.org).



# NNASC

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Supplier Council