

Sacagawea & Native American Golden Dollars

A compilation of notes from the U.S. Mint

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Sacagawea \$1



Native American \$1

Sacagawea Golden \$1 Coin (2000-2008)



Sacagawea was the Shoshone Indian who assisted the historic Lewis and Clark expedition. From 1804-1806, while still a teenager, she guided the adventurers from the Northern Great Plains to the Pacific Ocean and back. Her husband and their son, who was born during the trip, also accompanied the group.

At about the age of 11, Sacagawea was captured by a Hidatsa raiding party and taken from her Shoshone tribe. She was later sold into slavery with the Missouri River Mandans. They then sold her (or gave her away in a bet) to Toussaint Charbonneau, a French-Canadian fur trader, who made her his wife.

Charbonneau was hired by Captains Lewis and Clark primarily because of the skills his wife, Sacagawea, possessed. Sacagawea was only 15 years old at the time and already six months pregnant. Despite these possible limitations for such an arduous journey, she knew several Indian languages, and being Shoshone, could help Lewis and Clark make contact with her people and acquire horses that were crucial to the success of the mission.

Her contribution far exceeded anything Lewis and Clark had expected. She provided crucial knowledge of the topography of some of the most rugged country of North America and taught the explorers how to find edible roots and plants previously unknown to European-Americans. With her infant son bound to her back, she single-handedly rescued Captain Clark's journals from the Missouri whitewater when their boat capsized. If she had not, much of the record of the first year of the expedition would have been lost to history.

Most crucially, however, Sacagawea and her infant served as a "white flag" of peace for the expedition. They entered potentially hostile territory well-armed but undermanned compared to the Native American tribes they met. Because no war party was ever accompanied by a woman and infant, the response of the Native Americans was curiosity, not aggression. They talked first, and Sacagawea often served as the translator. Not a single member of the party was lost to hostile action.

It is not surprising that after their trip ended, the adventurers felt a lifelong debt to Sacagawea. In fact, Clark wrote to Charbonneau that Sacagawea deserved a greater reward than what the expedition gave her. His sense of indebtedness to Sacagawea is reflected a few years later when Clark accepted responsibility for educating Sacagawea's son and, after Sacagawea's death at the age of 25, for a daughter as well. Sacagawea's grave is in Lander, Wyoming.

Obverse Design

The Golden Dollar's obverse (heads) design has Sacagawea portrayed in three-quarter profile. In a departure from numismatic tradition, she looks straight at the holder. Glenna Goodacre, the artist of the obverse, included the large, dark eyes attributed to Sacagawea in Shoshone legends. Goodacre used a present-day Shoshone college student, Randy'L He-dow Teton, as her model.

On her back, Sacagawea carries Jean Baptiste, her infant son. Six months pregnant when she joined the Lewis and Clark expedition, Sacagawea gave birth to Jean Baptiste early in the journey.

Obverse inscriptions are "LIBERTY" and "IN GOD WE TRUST" as well as the year and mint mark.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design features a soaring eagle encircled by 17 stars. The 17 stars represent each state in the Union at the time of the 1804 Lewis and Clark expedition.

Reverse inscriptions are "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA," "E PLURIBUS UNUM" and "ONE DOLLAR."

Mintage

The Sacagawea \$1 Coins were issued for circulation in 2000 and 2001. They were not issued for circulation in 2002 through 2008.

Native American \$1 Coin (2009 to date)

Native American \$1 Coins honor and recognize the important contributions made by Indian tribes and individual Native Americans to the development and history of the United States. The U.S. Mint is proud to offer the Native American \$1 Coin Program with changing reverse designs each year and a common obverse design featuring Sacagawea.

Common Obverse

For the Native American \$1 Coin program, the obverse (heads) design retains the central figure of the "Sacagawea" design first produced in the 2000-2008 Sacagawea Golden Dollar program with the inscriptions "LIBERTY" and "IN GOD WE TRUST." The year, mint mark and "E PLURIBUS UNUM" are located on the edge of the coin.



Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design changes every year. The inscriptions "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" and "\$1" also appear.

Themes: 2009 to date

2009 *Three Sisters Agriculture*

2018 *Jim Thorpe*

2010 *Great Tree of Peace*

2019 *American Indians in Space*

2011 *Wampanoag Treaty with Plymouth Bay*

2020 *Elizabeth Peratrovich*

2012 *Trade Routes in the 17th Century*

2021 *Native Americans in the U.S. Military*

2013 *Delaware Treaty of 1778*

2022 *Ely Parker*

2014 *Hospitality to Lewis & Clark*

2023 *Maria Tallchief*

2015 *Mohawk Ironworkers*

2024 *Indian Citizenship Act of 1924*

2016 *Code Talkers*

2025 *Mary Kawena Pukui*

2017 *Sequoyah*

2026 *Polly Cooper*

Mintage

The Native American \$1 Coins were issued for circulation in 2009 through 2011. They were not issued for circulation in 2012 through 2026.

2009 Three Sisters Agriculture

The 2009 Native American \$1 Coin is based on the theme of agriculture.

Spread of Three Sisters Agriculture (1000 A.D.)

Maize was domesticated in central Mexico and spread from the southwest through North America, along with symbiotic "Three Sisters" agriculture, in which corn, beans, and squash growing in the same mound enhanced the productivity of each plant. Native American skill in agriculture provided the margin of survival for the early European colonists, either through trade or direct sharing of expertise, and agricultural products native to the Americas quickly became staples throughout Europe.



Three Sisters symbiotic agriculture—planting corn, climbing beans, and squash together in the same plot—also originated in central Mexico and probably spread simultaneously with the corn. In this efficient planting method, corn stalks provided support for the bean vines, which added nitrogen to the soil. Squash provided ground cover, which discouraged weeds. Productivity was much higher (by some estimates as much as 30 percent) for the three grown together than each grown separately.

Agriculture

Agriculture has always been an important subject in Native American culture. Native American culture emphasizes living with the land and understanding the surrounding natural resources. When Europeans first arrived in the "New World," one of the largest contributions and benefits of their relationships with Native Americans was the sharing of agricultural information. It is widely acknowledged that colonists would not have survived in the New World without the support and knowledge gained from Native American agricultural techniques.

Native Americans practiced crop rotation, round cropping, hybridizations, seed development, irrigation methods, and many other agricultural techniques that are still used today.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design features a Native American woman planting seeds in a field of corn, beans, and squash.

2010 Great Tree of Peace

The theme for the 2010 Native American \$1 Coin is "*Government—The Great Tree of Peace.*"

Great Tree of Peace (early 1400s)

The Haudenosaunee Confederation, also known as the Iroquois Confederacy of upstate New York, was remarkable for being founded by two historic figures, the Peacemaker and his Onondaga spokesman, Hiawatha, who spent years preaching the need for a league. The Peacemaker sealed the treaty by symbolically burying weapons at the foot of a Great White Pine, or Great Tree of Peace, whose five-needle clusters stood for the original five nations: Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca.



The Hiawatha Belt is a visual record of the creation of the Haudenosaunee dating back to the early 1400s, with five symbols representing the five original Nations. The Haudenosaunee symbol, the Great White Pine, is the central figure on the belt, also representing the Onondaga Nation. The four square symbols on the belt represent the Mohawk, Oneida, Cayuga, and Seneca nations. The bundle of five arrows symbolizes strength in unity for the Iroquois Confederacy.

Northern European settlers from France, England, and the Netherlands interacted with the Haudenosaunee as a separate diplomatic power. The success of the confederation showed the colonists that the Greek confederacies they had read about in the histories of Polybius were a viable political alternative to monarchy. The symbolism of the Great Tree of Peace and eagle sitting on its top were adopted as national icons during the American Revolution.

Background: Government

Some early narratives by explorers and missionaries introduced Europe to Native American societies which practiced equality and democratic self-government. These narratives quickly found their way into classics of European thought, including Sir Thomas More's "Utopia" and Montaigne's "Essays." John Locke cited the Huron election of its chiefs in his refutation of the Divine Right of Kings.

When the newly independent Americans devised a continental government, they may have seen in these native societies living examples of the successful confederacies that they admired in the ancient Greek histories. Many tribal groups established confederations often based on linguistic affinity. One of the most famous and powerful of these Native leagues was the Iroquois Confederacy, known to its members as the Haudenosaunee (People of the Longhouse) or the Six Nations.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design features an image of the Hiawatha Belt with five arrows bound together.

2011 Wampanoag Treaty with Plymouth Bay

The theme for the 2011 Native American \$1 Coin is *"Supreme Sachem Ousamequin, Massasoit of the Great Wampanoag Nation Creates Alliance with Settlers at Plymouth Bay (1621)."*



Introduction: Diplomacy—Treaties with Tribal Nations

Within Native American culture, the ability to make peace was historically as highly prized as leadership in war and often conducted by a separate peace chief, who stepped in when the time for the warriors had passed. For centuries, tribes created alliances with each other that spanned hundreds of miles. One of the first treaties for a mutual alliance with settlers in what became the United States of America occurred between the Puritan settlers at Plymouth and the Massasoit of the Pokanoket Wampanoag in 1621. Historians credit the alliance with the Massasoit with ensuring survival of the Plymouth colony.

From the Declaration of Independence until 1868, the U.S. made some 370 treaties with Indian tribes. Congress suspended formal treaty-making in 1868, but since then, government-to-government relations between the U.S. and sovereign tribes have taken a variety of other legal forms. Current U.S. policy states that federal relations with recognized tribes are conducted on a government-to-government basis.

Contribution: Supreme Sachem Ousamequin, Massasoit of the Great Wampanoag Nation Creates Alliance with Settlers at Plymouth Bay (1621)

In the spring of 1621, Ousamequin, the Massasoit (a title meaning head chief) of the Wampanoag Indians, made a formal treaty with the English who settled at Patuxet (in what is now Plymouth, Massachusetts). The document might well be the first written treaty between an indigenous people and European settlers in what is now the U.S. It consisted of six provisions, recorded in William Bradford's "History of Plimoth Plantation."

Massasoit promised to defend the Plymouth settlers against hostile tribes in return for their intervention if his people were attacked. His intermediaries—Tisquantum, Samoset and Hobbamack—gave the settlers invaluable tips on survival.

The Plymouth settlers honored the treaty later that summer by coming to Massasoit's rescue when they thought he had been captured by enemies. In mid-October 1621, Massasoit and 90 of his tribesmen celebrated a harvest feast at Plymouth for three days (a traditional English folk celebration). The 1621 feast inspired the legend of the first Thanksgiving, as it was called 220 years later. The treaty at Patuxet lasted more than 50 years.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design features hands of the Supreme Sachem Ousamequin Massasoit and Governor John Carver, symbolically offering the ceremonial peace pipe after the initiation of the first formal written peace alliance between the Wampanoag tribe and the European settlers.

2012 Trade Routes in 17th Century

The theme for the 2012 Native American \$1 Coin is “*Trade Routes in the 17th Century*.”

Trade and Economy

American Indians maintained widespread trans-continental, inter-tribal trade for more than a millennium. The Native American trade infrastructure became the channel by which exploration, settlement, and economic development in the colonial period — and later of the young republic — ultimately thrived. When early European traders ventured from eastern city centers into the interior lands, they followed trading routes still in use, often in the company of Native American guides and traders who had used them for generations. In addition, they encountered an ecosystem and Native American culture already being transformed by European goods that had moved along these trading routes long before Europeans themselves arrived in the interior regions.



These routes showed the way to European explorers and traders and marked the corridors for future east-west travel. The Lewis and Clark Expedition in 1803 followed parts of this trail. This cross-continental trade infrastructure culminated in the construction of the modern-day interstate highway system. Trading routes centered on Zuni Pueblo in the Four Corners region of the southwest and the Mojave bead route to the California coast were incorporated into the Old Spanish Trail (now a National Park Service historic trail). The Old Snake Trade Route connected the pueblos of New Mexico north to the Mandan villages in the present-day Dakotas, branching to the west in present-day Wyoming and reaching the Columbia River at The Dalles in Oregon.

Trade Routes in the 17th Century

Of all the goods traded throughout the continent, the horse, spread by Indian tribes through Native American trade routes, is perhaps the most significant. Thanks to inter-tribal trade, horses had crossed the Rio Grande by 1600. This trade received a massive infusion in 1680, when the Pueblo Revolt released thousands of horses from the mission herds into Native American hands.

The horse became perhaps the most sought-after commodity in inter-tribal trade. The horse's spread in Native American hands was so prodigious that it became the primary means of transportation and the nucleus of the ranching economy already underway in the western territories. In the south, the Caddo trade center became a major entry point for the horse. Trade up the Old Snake Route brought horses as far north as the Mandan in North Dakota, who supplied them to the Lakota and Blackfeet. A parallel inter-mountain route brought horses to the northwest. By the time Lewis and Clark wintered with the Mandan in 1803, they encountered a well-established horse culture. These long-established Native American trade routes also provided the path for this primary means of transportation — a significant contribution to opening up the continental interior to the developing Nation.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design features a Native American and horse in profile with horses running in the background, representing the historical spread of the horse.

2013 Delaware Treaty of 1778

The 2013 Native American \$1 Coin commemorates the Delaware Treaty of 1778.

After declaring independence, the United States signed its first formal treaty with an Indian tribe, the Delaware, at Fort Pitt (now Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) on September 17, 1778. The mutual defense treaty allowed American troops to pass through the Delaware Tribe's land to attack the British fort at Detroit, Mich. Under the treaty, the United States recognized the Delaware Nation's sovereignty. The treaty also offered significant insight into the later process of incorporating tribes into the federal system. Article VI of the treaty gave the Delaware Nation the option of joining other tribes in the Ohio region to form a state with the Delaware Tribe at the head to become part of the U.S. confederation, with representation in Congress. Although the statehood option was never taken up, it foreshadowed the later acknowledgment of tribes as partners in the federal system.



When the American Revolution established a new sovereign government on the North American continent, its founders acknowledged the significance of Indian tribes as the new United States of America dealt with tribes government-to-government, making peace, and winning allies through a series of treaties. The new Constitution in 1789 reserved the regulation of commerce with the tribes to the federal government—specifically in Article I, section 8, clause 3—putting them on the same footing as foreign governments. The First Congress affirmed this principle in major legislation on trade and land deals with Indians—laws that are still in effect.

Treaty-making with the United States was the foundation for tribal relations with the new American government. But the legal theory underlying that relationship was sharply contested until Chief Justice John Marshall's pivotal 1832 decision in *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*. In declaring tribes to be dependent nations, he started the process by which tribes were recognized under the American federal system, equal in status with state governments as the third leg of sovereign membership, but also diminished in stature under this system.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design features a turkey, howling wolf, and turtle (all symbols of the clans of the Delaware Tribe), and a ring of 13 stars to represent the Colonies.

2014 Hospitality to Lewis & Clark

The 2014 Native American \$1 Coin commemorates how Native American hospitality ensured the success of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

When the Lewis and Clark Expedition crossed the Continental Divide, the nature of its mission fundamentally changed. Up to that point, it had been exploring territory that European powers would recognize as belonging to the United States through the Louisiana Purchase. Once past the headwaters of the Missouri River, the expedition was securing the American claim to a new accession of territory, the Pacific Northwest.



More than ever before, success of the mission depended on help from the Indian tribes, who might not have understood the long-term consequences of their hospitality. For every step of their way through the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Coast, Lewis and Clark depended on the friendship, supplies and logistical support of the tribes on their route. They camped in the midst of the Mandan and Hidatsa tribes in the winter of 1804-05 and the Clatsop in 1806, and their cooperation was essential to the resounding success of this mission.

Contribution

The Mandan and Hidatsa tribes of the Missouri River welcomed Lewis and Clark and their Corps of Discovery to their unique dome-shaped earthen lodge villages, often sitting and talking by the campfire when meeting with Black Cat, the Mandan chief. The tribes were located in present-day North Dakota. Their village was the central marketplace for the northern plains.

Lewis expressed the highest respect for Black Cat (Posecopsahe) and walked miles out of his way to smoke a pipe with him on the day of his departure. The expedition group traded for corn and gathered every scrap of intelligence they could about the route ahead.

During the winter at Fort Mandan, the expedition blacksmith forged somewhat eccentric ax heads to trade for corn. Eighteen months later, the expedition found that some of the same ax heads had already been traded to the Nez Perce, which the expedition relied on to supply horses from their famous herd. Down the length of the Columbia River, the Americans traded with the Chinook and other tribes for provisions.

The Clatsop Indians were flourishing people who enjoyed plentiful amounts of fish and fur and occupied three villages on the southern side of the Columbia River. They were located in what is now known as Oregon. Some Clatsop tribesmen complained about the expedition's stinginess with gifts. Coboway, chief of one of the villages, visited the expedition group at its fort, which was still under construction. He exchanged some goods, including a sea otter pelt, for fishhooks and a small bag of Shoshone tobacco. Over the rest of the winter, Coboway would be a frequent and welcome visitor to this area they named Fort Clatsop.

The Clatsop also aided the expedition both in preparing for, and dealing with, the northwest winter and informed Lewis and Clark that there was a good amount of elk on the south side of the Columbia, information that influenced the construction of Fort Clatsop where they did. When the expedition's food

supplies were running low, the Clatsop informed the corps that a whale had washed ashore some miles to the south.

At the expedition's departure from Fort Clatsop, Lewis wrote in his journal that Coboway "has been much more kind an[d] hospitable to us than any other indian in this neighbourhood." Lewis committed the expedition's one act of pilferage, appropriating a Native canoe for the voyage up the river. (He later encountered a Lumhi Indian who claimed ownership of the vessel and paid him off with an elk skin.) This misdeed remained on the historical record, and late in 2011, the family of William Clark presented a replica of the original canoe to the Chinook tribe in recompense.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design depicts a Native American man offering a pipe while his wife offers provisions of fish, corn, roots and gourds. In the background is a stylized image of the face of William Clark's compass highlighting "NW," the area in which the expedition occurred.

2015 Mohawk Ironworkers

The 2015 Native American \$1 Coin commemorates the contributions of the Kahnawake Mohawk and Mohawk Akwesasne communities to "high iron" construction work and the building of New York City skyscrapers.



American Indians have become legendary figures in hazardous occupations. Tribes take great pride in the bravery of their people, whether displayed in "high iron" construction work on the tallest skyscrapers or fire jumping and brake-cutting in the face of the West's raging wildfires. These occupations receive the honor given to warriors in days past, and they carry on the ancient ethic of putting one's life on the line to protect the welfare and safety of the people. Just as the ancient warriors devoted themselves to preserving all the people of the tribe, the modern risk-takers see their occupations as a contribution to the public good.

The tradition of Mohawk high iron working dates to 1886, when the Dominion Bridge Company started a bridge from the Kahnawake Mohawk community across the St. Lawrence River. Mohawks were first employed as day laborers, but they insisted on working on the bridge itself, and supervisors were amazed at their ability to handle heights. The danger of the work became evident in 1907 at the Quebec Bridge project, designed to be the largest cantilevered bridge in the world. On August 29, the structure failed, and the bridge collapsed into the river, killing 33 Mohawk workers. Four family names were wiped out. After the disaster the Kahnawake Clan Mothers ruled that large numbers of Mohawk men could not work on the same project at the same time.

Native ironworkers were in increasing demand in the 20th century as skyscrapers, tall bridges, and other high elevation projects began to go up around North America. Crews from Kahnawake and the Mohawk Akwesasne communities in upstate New York and Canada made the trek to New York City to build its skyline, including the Empire State Building, the Chrysler Building, and work above the 80th floor on the World Trade Center twin towers. At one point, one in four men at Akwesasne worked in high-rise construction.

The tradition entered a new and poignant phase after the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center, witnessed at close hand by a Mohawk construction crew on a nearby building. Dozens of Mohawk ironworkers volunteered for the dangerous job of removing debris. The venerated "9-11" flag displayed at the 2002 Winter Olympics was recovered from the lobby of Six World Trade Center by a Mohawk worker from Akwesasne on the day after the attack. The St. Regis Reservation Tribal Council—the government for the U.S. side of the Mohawk Akwesasne community that straddles the Canada/U.S. border—and the iron workers local union collected respirators to donate to the New York Fire Department for the recovery effort.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design depicts a Mohawk ironworker reaching for an I-beam that is swinging into position, rivets on the left and right side of the border, and a high elevation view of the city skyline in the background.

2016 Code Talkers

The 2016 Native American \$1 Coin commemorates the contributions of the Native American Code Talkers in World War I and World War II.

It is estimated that more than 12,000 Native Americans served in the U.S. military during World War I. In World War II, more than 44,000 Native Americans, out of a total Native American population of less than 350,000, served with distinction in both the European and Pacific theaters. Hundreds played a vital communications role in both world wars. This select group of Native Americans was asked to develop and use secret battle codes using their native languages to communicate troop movements and enemy positions. Their efforts saved many lives because America's enemies were unable to decode their messages.



Native languages came to play an increasingly vital role in the U.S. war effort in both World War I and II. Several tribes provided Native American speakers for telephone squads on the French battlefields in World War I. Additional tribes sent soldiers to join the code talkers of World War II, serving in North Africa, Italy, France, and the Pacific. The languages used by American Indians greatly assisted their fellow American soldiers in the heat of battle by transmitting messages in unbreakable battle codes. The Navajo code talkers from the World War II Pacific theater were the most famous group, numbering approximately 420 by the end of the war.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design features two helmets—one in the shape of the U.S. helmets used in World War I and the other in the shape of a World War II helmet. Behind the helmets are two feathers that form a "V," symbolizing victory, unity, and the important role that the code talkers played in both world wars.

2017 Sequoyah

The 2017 Native American \$1 Coin commemorates Sequoyah, inventor of the Cherokee Syllabary.

Sequoyah adapted writing to the Cherokee language by devising symbols for each syllable. His achievement is one of a handful of examples in world history regarding the development of an original writing system. After 12 years of work, Sequoyah unveiled the alphabet in a demonstration with his daughter Ah-yo-ka. News spread quickly and Cherokees flocked to learn the system. In 1821, the Cherokee Nation adopted it as its own. Within months, thousands of Cherokee became literate.



The Cherokee Syllabary gave birth to Native American journalism. The first American Indian newspaper, the Cherokee Phoenix, included editorials which embodied the Cherokees' determination to retain their lands, news on activities of the Cherokee government, as well as relations with the federal and state governments. This written language helped create a dialogue between the Cherokee Nation and the United States Government, and assisted in the preservation of interests, hopes and struggles of individuals during a unique time in our history.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design features a profile of Sequoyah writing “Sequoyah from Cherokee Nation” in syllabary along the border of the design.

2018 Jim Thorpe

The theme of the 2018 Native American \$1 Coin design is *"Jim Thorpe, an athlete and Olympian."*

James Francis "Jim" Thorpe (1888-1953), was born near Prague, Oklahoma, in what was then Indian Territory. Raised in the Sac and Fox tribe, he was given the native name Wa-Tho-Huk, meaning "Bright Path." Jim Thorpe became possibly the most versatile natural athlete of the early 20th century.



After a difficult youth, running away from school after several family crises, Thorpe came into his own at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Although the residential Indian school had a mixed reputation, Carlisle then had the services of one of the great early football coaches, Glenn Scobey "Pop" Warner. It fielded a national championship football team, led by Thorpe. At the time, Thorpe was the core of the school's track and field team, also coached by Warner. The story is that Warner was reluctant to let his track star run the risk of playing football.

Thorpe was named to the All-American first team in 1911 and 1912. In 1911, Carlisle upset Harvard 18-15, as Thorpe scored all its points, four field goals and a touchdown. In 1912, Carlisle won the national collegiate championship. It beat Army 27-6; during the game, a cadet named Dwight D. Eisenhower injured his knee trying to tackle Thorpe.

In 1912, Thorpe represented the U. S. at the Summer Olympics in Stockholm, Sweden, competing in the new Pentathlon and Decathlon as well as two field events. He easily won both multi-event medals, finishing first in eight of the combined 15 events. His point record stood for two decades. In an often-told story, King Gustav V of Sweden, presenting Thorpe a special decathlon award, told him, "You are the greatest athlete in the world," and Thorpe replied, "Thanks, king."

Thorpe then embarked on an incredibly varied career with the public flocking to his professional appearances in football, baseball, and basketball. He played for six teams in what later became the National Football League. In 1922, he became the first president of the American Professional Football Association, precursor of the NFL. In baseball, he played for the New York Giants, the Cincinnati Reds and the Boston Braves. He also organized an all-Indian football team, reuniting some Carlisle players. Today, sports writers rank him at the top of their lists of greatest athletes of the 20th Century.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design depicts Jim Thorpe, while the foreground highlights his achievements in football and as an Olympian.

2019 American Indians in Space

The theme of the 2019 Native American \$1 Coin design is “*American Indians in the Space Program.*”

Native Americans have been on the modern frontier of space flight since the beginning of NASA. Their contributions to the U.S. space program culminated in the space walks of John Herrington (Chickasaw Nation) on the International Space Station in 2002. This and other pioneering achievements date back to the work of Mary Golda Ross (Cherokee Nation). Considered the first Native American engineer in the U.S. space program, Ross helped develop the Agena spacecraft for the Gemini and Apollo space programs.



Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design features Mary Golda Ross writing calculations. In the background, an Atlas-Agena rocket launches into space, with an equation inscribed in its cloud. The equation, denoting the energy it takes to leave Earth and reach the orbit of a distant planet, represents her important contributions to the space program. An astronaut, symbolic of Native American astronauts, including John Herrington, conducts a spacewalk above. A group of stars in the field behind indicates outer space.

2020 Elizabeth Peratrovich

The theme of the 2020 Native American \$1 Coin design is “*Elizabeth Peratrovich and Alaska's Anti-Discrimination Law.*”

The first anti-discrimination law in the United States, prohibiting discrimination in access to public accommodations, was passed in the Alaskan territorial government in 1945. Elizabeth Peratrovich (Tlingit nation), through her advocacy for Alaskan Natives with her husband Roy and an impassioned speech in the Alaskan Senate in support of the law, is widely credited with getting it passed.



2020 marks the 75th anniversary of Elizabeth Peratrovich's famous testimony in support of the nation's first anti-discrimination law.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design features a portrait of Elizabeth Peratrovich, whose advocacy was considered a deciding factor in the passage of the 1945 Anti-Discrimination Law in the Alaskan Territorial Government. The foreground features a symbol of the Tlingit Raven moiety, of which she was a member.

2021 Native Americans in the U.S. Military

The theme of the 2021 Native American \$1 Coin is “*Native Americans in the U.S. Military.*”

Native Americans have served in the Armed Forces of the United States in each of our nation's conflicts, beginning with the Revolutionary War. They have served at a higher rate in proportion to their population than any other ethnic group. During World War I, Native Americans volunteered to fight in astonishing numbers although most were ineligible for the draft. Of the 10,000 Native Americans who served in the Army and the 2,000 who served in the Navy, three out of four were volunteers.

Native Americans have received recognition for their service, including five Medals of Honor during World War II. Their exemplary record of military service continues to this day.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design features eagle feathers, which were traditionally earned in battle or by performing a brave deed. Eagle feathers are revered and respected, receiving the utmost care and handling, and are to be displayed proudly in homes. Stars representing five branches of the U.S. military are in the foreground, while a circle provides an additional reference to Native Americans.



2022 Ely Parker

The 2022 Native American \$1 Coin honors Ely Samuel Parker, a U.S. Army officer, engineer, and tribal diplomat, who served as military secretary to Ulysses S. Grant during the U.S. Civil War. When Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox, Virginia, on the morning of April 9, 1865, Parker rendered the formal surrender documents in his own hand.



Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design features Ely Samuel Parker, depicted in Army uniform. A quill pen and book, along with a likeness of his graceful signature, are symbols of his experience as an expert communicator. The inscriptions “TONAWANDA SENECA” and “HA-SA-NO-AN-DA” recognize his tribe and the name given to him at birth.

2023 Maria Tallchief

The theme of the 2023 Native American \$1 Coin is “*Maria Tallchief and American Indians in Ballet.*”

Maria Tallchief is considered America's first major prima ballerina. She is the first Native American (Osage Nation) to hold the rank. In addition to Tallchief, four other American Indian ballerinas from Oklahoma achieved international recognition in the 20th century, including her younger sister Marjorie Tallchief, Yvonne Chouteau, Rosella Hightower, and Moscelyne Larkin. Celebrated as the "Five Moons," their legacy of achievement and inclusion continues to influence ballet today.



Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design features Maria Tallchief in balletic pose. A nod to the “Five Moons” is presented in the lunar motif, while the four ballerinas in the background are symbolic of both Tallchief’s American Indian ballerina contemporaries and the generations of dancers they inspired.

2024 Indian Citizenship Act of 1924

The theme of the 2024 Native American \$1 Coin is the "*Indian Citizenship Act of 1924.*"

On June 2, 1924, the Indian Citizenship Act was signed into law, granting U. S. citizenship to "all non-citizen Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States." The Act notably did not require American Indians to give up their tribal citizenship to become U.S. citizens, allowing individual Indian people to preserve their tribal identity and their right to communal tribal property.



Not only did the Act give American Indians the rights and protections afforded to citizens of the United States, it added to the diversity of thought and culture of our nation by unlocking the doors for Indians to become citizens of the United States on their own terms.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design shows an eagle staff, an American Indian symbol of respect, honor, and patriotism, together with an American flag to represent the dual citizenship of Native Americans.

2025 Mary Kawena Pukui

The 2025 Native American \$1 coin honors Hawaiian scholar, author, composer, hula expert, and educator Mary Kawena Pukui, a Native Hawaiian.

Nānā I Ke Kumu is the title of a series of books that Pukui helped produce with the Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center. The phrase itself is considered very evocative of Pukui's life, work, and legacy, as she was someone who was constantly consulted for her expertise on various aspects of Hawaiian knowledge. Hawaiian knowledge is symbolized through the leaves and nuts of Hawaii's state tree, the kukui.



Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design features Mary Kawena Pukui wearing a hibiscus flower, a kukui nut lei, and a mu'umu'u adorned with an aloha print. Stylized depictions of water appear in the background. Inscriptions include "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA," "\$1," and "Nānā I Ke Kumu," which translates literally to "Look to the Source."

2026 Polly Cooper

The 2026 Native American \$1 Coin honors the Oneida Tribe at Valley Forge. The coin's reverse depicts an Oneida woman (Polly Cooper) who, along with her tribe, aided the starving Continental Army in achieving independence from Great Britain during the American Revolution.

Reverse Design

The reverse (tails) design portrays Polly Cooper holding a basket as she shares the Oneidas' gift of corn with General Washington, who holds his hat in an expression of gratitude and respect. The design represents the generosity, courage, and sacrifice of the Oneida during the American Revolutionary War. The inscriptions are "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA," "POLLY COOPER," "\$1," and "ONEIDA ALLIES AT VALLEY FORGE," which pays tribute to an important Native American ally and its contributions to the Continental Army.

