2014
State of the Nation

Halito and Greetings from the Choctaw Nation.

It is truly an honor to represent you, our Chahta People, as Chief of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. As your new Chief, I am privileged to provide the first progress report on the State of the Choctaw Nation. I am happy to report the Choctaw Nation is doing extremely well.

Our culture, history and language are alive and well. Tribal members across the nation are becoming more aware and involved through community events. A renewed sense of fulfillment and pride in our culture is sweeping the land. We are expanding opportunities for our people as we now have more members than ever before who are receiving educational and training assistance to help them achieve independence for themselves and their families. We are continuing to grow our businesses so our tribe as a whole can be independent and follow the best path for our people while remaining sustainable for many years to come.

I am aware many of our tribal members still have unmet needs, and that is why it is important to expand opportunities to our members through education and job creation. The tribe plans to expand the Head Start, food distribution and health programs. We plan to create businesses for the sustainability of the tribe and the employment of our tribal members. Lastly, I plan to continue to focus on our culture and the values that make us unique. Values like honor, respect, faith and family will keep us - the Chahta people - united and strong so we will all say Chahta sia hoke! I am Choctaw!

Yakoke,
Chief Gary Batton

Chief Gary Batton, wife Angie, son David and grandchildren Jeffrey and Kaylynn.
Assistant Chief Jack Austin, Jr., and wife Philisha, sons Clark and Sam, and daughter Malacha.

Choctaw Nation Tribal Council

District 1
Councilman Thomas Williston
District 2
Councilman Tony Messenger
District 3
Councilman Kenny Bryant
District 4
Councilman Delton Cox
District 5
Councilman Ron Perry
District 6
Councilman Joe Coley
District 7
Councilman Jack Austin
District 8
Councilman Perry Thompson
District 9
Councilman Ted Dosh
District 10
Councilman Anthony Dillard
District 11
Councilman Bob Pate
District 12
Councilman James Frazier
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Chahta Successes

Pictured above, standing, Leigh Ward, Angie Williston, Brenner Billy, William “Junior” Myers, Caleb Taylor, Kris Ward, Kandace Folsom; and seated, Colina Hickman, Nicholas Charleston, Nicole Billy and Josh Riley. We are continuing the legacy of our culture by preserving our language and this second generation of speakers are going to help keep our tribe alive.

The following pages highlight a few of the many successes celebrated by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and its people.

The stickball team, Tvshka Homma, was formed in 2011 and had 80 players in its first appearance in the World Series which has now led to development of a youth league with 168 kids actively participating.
2013-14 Outstanding Elders Laura Mackey and Alfred Harley from District 6 form the first Council on Wisdom, providing mentorship and guidance.

Preserving our culture

- The Cultural Services department has held more than 400 hands-on classes.
- A new generation of Choctaw traditional potters are now producing more pottery (at least 300 vessels per year) than has been made at any other time in the last 150 years.
- Over the last year, the department has recorded over 900 Choctaw historic sites, and consulted with the federal government on 3,000 ground-disturbing projects within a nine-state area to prevent Choctaw sites from being disturbed.

The Bertram Bobb Chapel has been built at Tvhkka Homma in order for tribal members to have a place to worship during the festival as well as special events such as gospel singings. Bertram Bobb is the Choctaw Nation Chaplain.

Olin Williams was appointed Employee Chaplain in April 2014. Olin is a tribal historian, minister and counselor for many fellow staff members.
The Congressional Gold Medal was awarded to the Choctaw Nation and 31 other tribes in November 2013 in recognition of their Native American Code Talkers, a culmination of years of efforts for acknowledgement. The Choctaw Code Talkers were the first to use their language as a weapon in World War I. Silver medals were presented to families. The Choctaw Code Talkers during World War I were Joseph Oklahombi, Calvin Wilson, Robert Taylor, Ben Carterby, Solomon Louis, Albert Billy, Pete Maytubby, James Edwards, Noel Johnson, Tobias Frazier, Joe Davenport, George Davenport, Mitchell Bobb, Ben Hampton, Walter Veach, Otis Leader, Ben Colbert, Jeff Nelson and Victor Brown. In World War II were Schlicht Billy, Davis Pickens, Andrew Perry and Forrester T. Baker. One of the displays in the Choctaw Capitol Museum is an interactive exhibit on the second floor honoring these heroes.

The Choctaw Artist Registry has nearly tripled in the last year. It provides a means of recognizing Choctaw artists and our culture, of providing a way to contact these artists, and increasing opportunities to sell their works.

The Choctaw Nation sponsors a wide variety of summer camps every year and the attendance continues to grow as parents and their children learn of the benefits of learning more about their culture, polishing their skills and staying busy through the school break.
In 2011, a deadly tornado struck the town of Tushka. Many don’t realize the twister kept traveling and cut a path of destruction up the McGee Creek Valley. Virginia Self lost a roof on her home in the Redden community of Atoka County. Thankfully, she was away when the twister hit, but her son was huddled in the hallway. She knew she needed a storm shelter but being an elder with a fixed income, couldn’t afford one. The Choctaw Nation provided a storm shelter for Virginia, as it has done for hundreds of elders in Oklahoma and neighboring states in “Tornado Alley.”

The word “shelter” can have many meanings. The mother of three, Faye Cox of Antlers has taken care of her disabled son, her middle child, since birth. He is now 48 years old. Because of his cerebral palsy, Lonnie is no longer able to walk. Faye insists on continuing to care for Lonnie at home. The care and protection she has provided for her family is an inspiration. A newly installed above-ground storm shelter gives her peace of mind now that she knows they will be able to move everyone to safety.

In 2014, a new Independent Living Community for elderly Choctaws will open in Stigler. Independent Living Communities are currently located in Atoka, Calera, Hugo, Idabel, Talihina, Hartshorne, and Poteau. The ILC offers elders the independence of living in their own home in a safe community.
The Food Distribution Program has centers in Antlers, Poteau, McAlester and Durant. A new market-style center was opened in Durant in June. Two more are planned for Broken Bow and McAlester.

Carole Ayers and trainers from the Choctaw Wellness Center in Durant, Chance Adams and Madison Perkins, celebrate as they near the end of the 2014 Trail of Tears Walk at Wheelock. After a year dedicated to improving strength and range of movement, Carole no longer needs to use a walker.
Bradley Cobb has overcome many obstacles including unemployment and homelessness, and is now excited about a new career as a commercial truck driver. He obtained his CDL through the Career Development program with a determination that never waivered.

The Summer Youth Program employed 1,347 young men and women in 2014. The program helps the youth to learn good work ethics and often makes a difference in what they can afford to purchase for the upcoming school year.

Adults participating in the Workforce Investment Act program saw an average $10 hourly increase in salary.

Choctaw Career Development has helped 5,370 Choctaw members with training and finding employment. Certification programs offered mean higher salaries and a better way of life.

STAR awards are provided as incentives to students nationwide. There were 15,104 “Stars” this year who made A’s or B’s or had perfect attendance.

Choctaw Nation provided more than 5,320 higher ed scholarships in the last school year.

Graduation for 90 adult education students was held in 2014. The GED grads often go on to higher education or better jobs.
The future for Choctaw people

Construction continues on new facilities...

groundbreakings scheduled in 2014-15

- Sigler Independent Center
- McAlester Community Center
- McAlester Head Start
- McAlester Food Distribution
- McAlester Wellness Center
- Wilburton Wellness Center
- Broken Bow Food Distribution
- Poteau Clinic Expansion
- Bethel Community Center
- Bethel/Battiest Head Start
- Durant Health Clinic
- Tribal Headquarters
- Cultural Center

Increase of 64,382 Acres between 8/1/2013 to 8/1/2014

Reclaiming our land
The Durant clinic’s operation will be entirely managed by the Choctaw Nation beginning Oct. 1.

- GROUNDBREAKINGS -
POTEAU CLINIC EXPANSION in 2014
and a NEW DURANT CLINIC in early 2015

New Wellness Centers scheduled to open in Wilburton and McAlester.

We believe in investing in people first, creating independence from the federal government and planning for the future of our children.

The graph above shows the breakdown of 44% funds spent on services, 36% to our businesses that supply the means to keep services flowing, and 20% in preparation for the future to ensure there is always a solid foundation for our children and grandchildren.
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Faith ◆ Family ◆ Culture