

Isolated Tribal Communities: Accommodating the Disabled, Elderly & Those with Medical Needs

**2015 National Energy and Utility
Affordability Coalition
Annual Conference**



CANAR

Session Goals

- **Learn about CANAR**
- **Increase Awareness of the Scope of Disability in Indian Country**
- **Describe the Unique Circumstances of Indian Country Geography and its Impact on American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) with Disabilities**
- **Describe the Challenges to Access Social Services for AI/ANs**
- **Provide Social Service Providers with Outreach Guidance and Resources**
- **Offer CANAR as a Community Partner to Reach Vulnerable AI/AN Populations**



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Who is CANAR?

WE ARE the collective voice of our many Tribal Nations that honors and empowers our American Indian/Alaska Natives with disabilities through education and advocacy.

We are the only national tribal organization dedicated to increasing opportunities for our people living with disabilities.



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What is VISION 2025?

**How will it Improve Access for Vulnerable
AI/ANs to Social Service Providers?**



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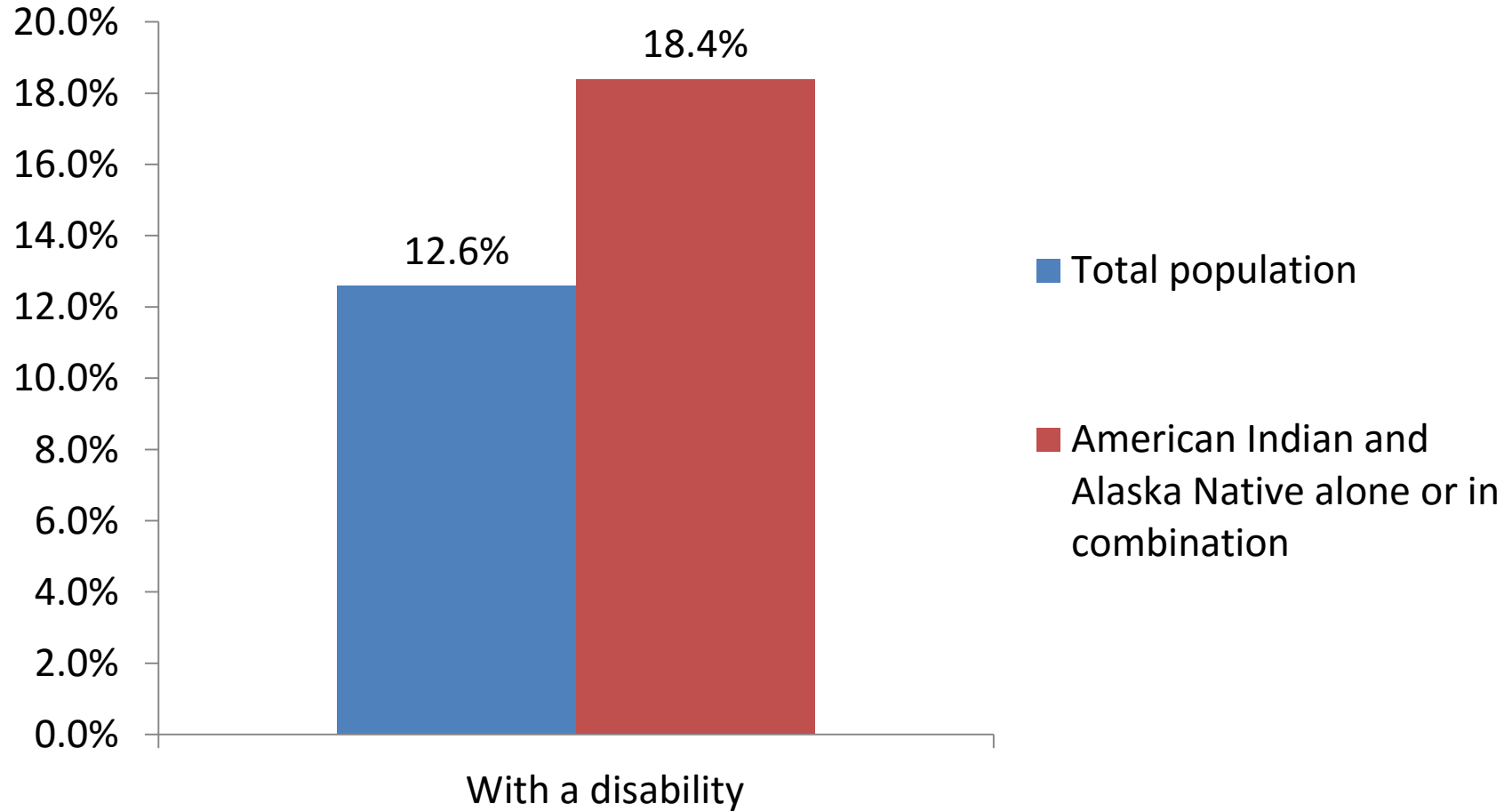
Scope of Disability in Indian Country

- **AI/ANs have the Highest Rate of Disability of any other Demographic Group**
- **AI/AN Veterans have the Highest Rate of Disability, service-connected or otherwise, than Veterans of other races**
- **There are nearly 1 Million AI/ANs with Disabilities**
- **There are approximately 600,000 AI/ANs with Disabilities who are Working Age Adults**
- **Approximately 22% of AI/ANs live in Tribal Areas**



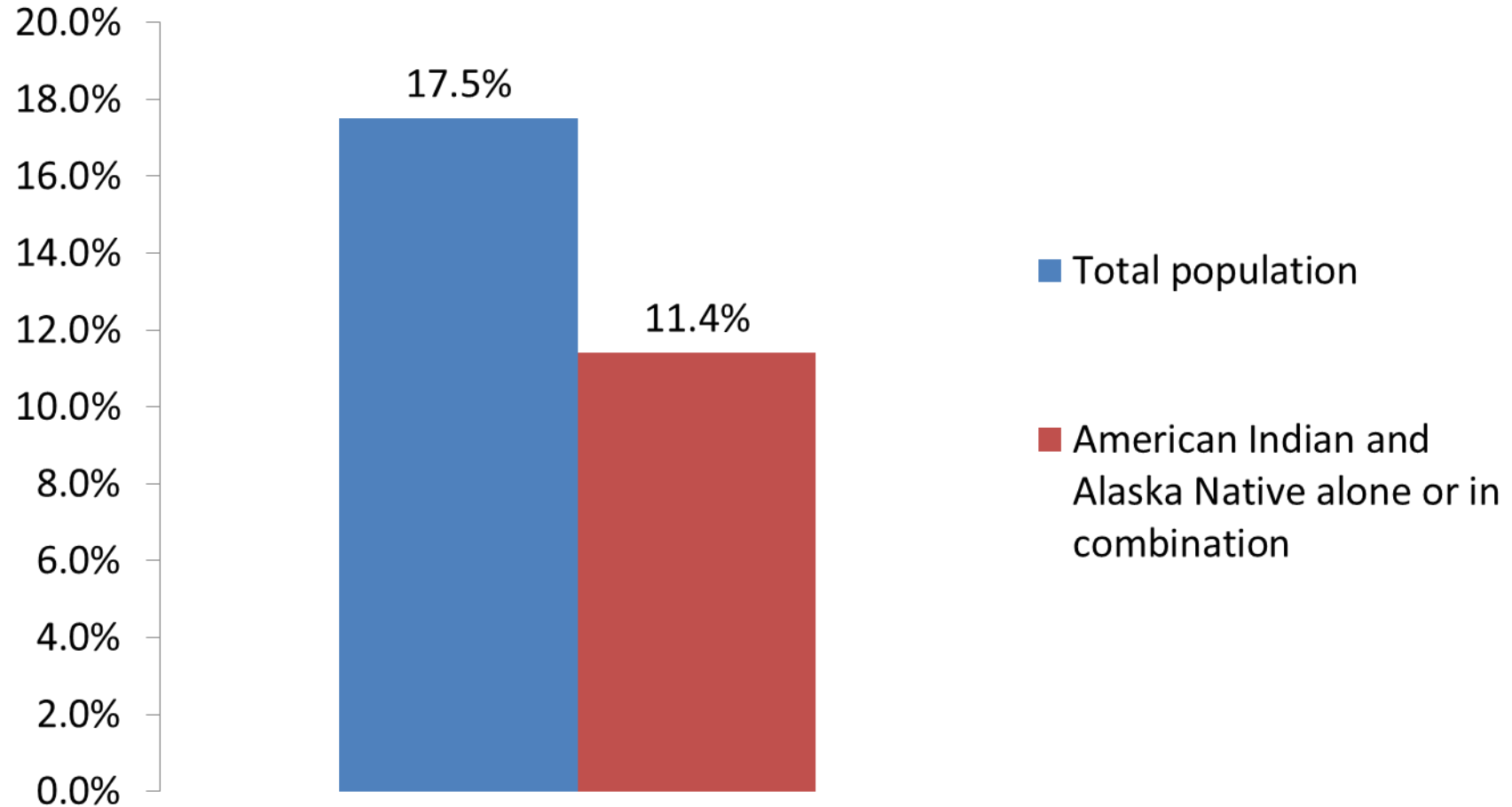
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Total Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population with a Disability: American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2013



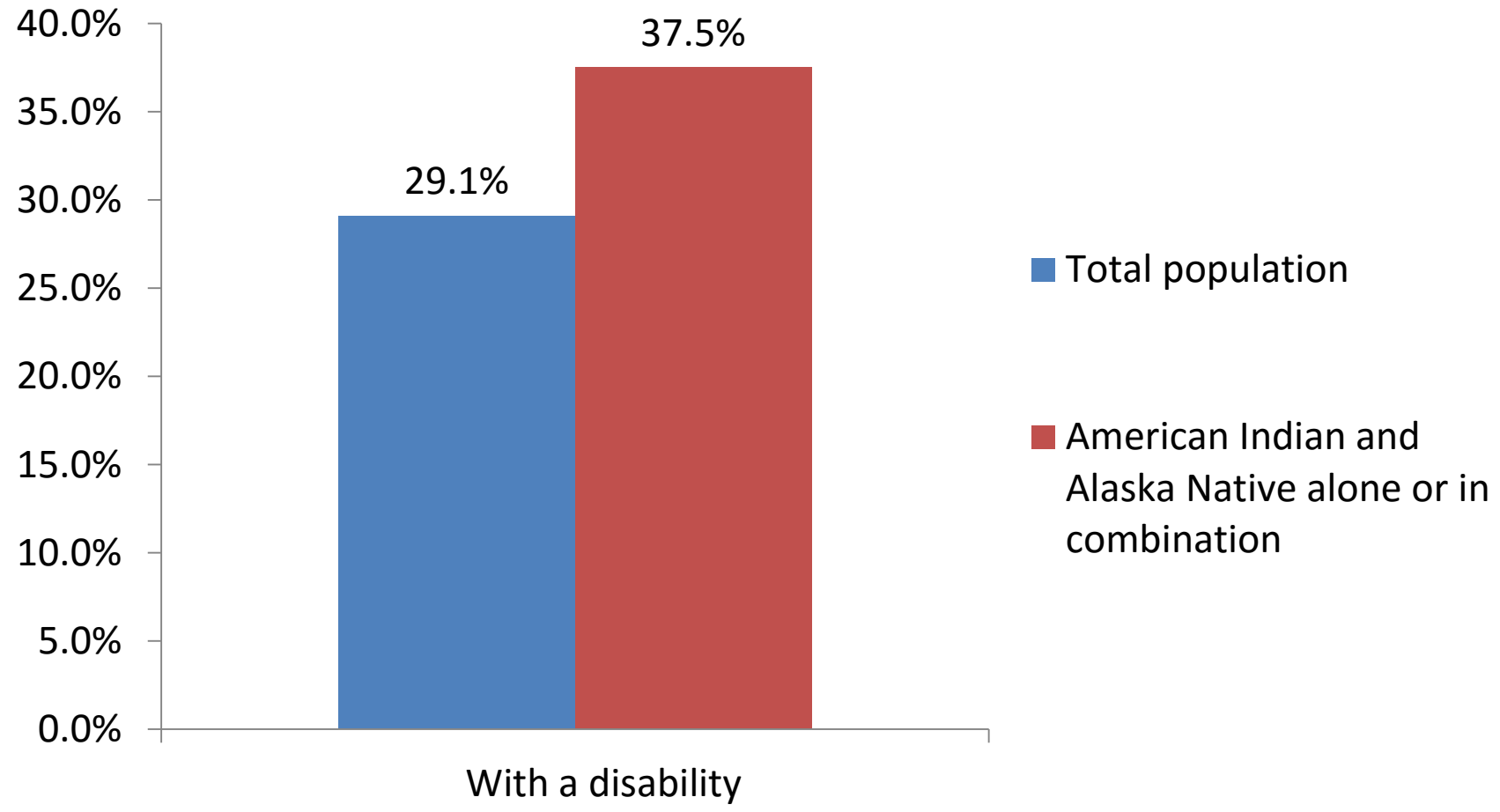
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Total Population 62 Years and Over: ACS 2013



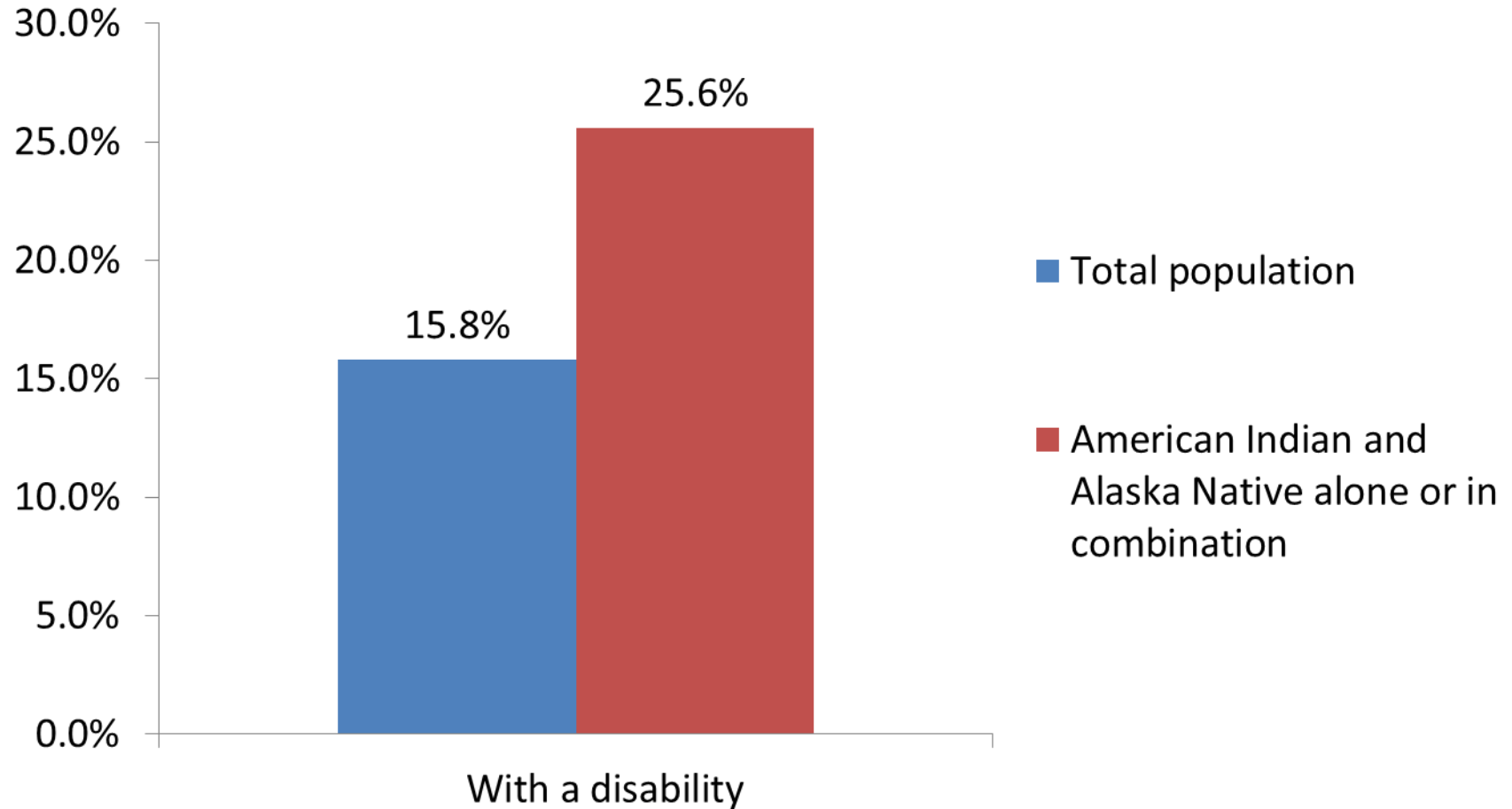
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Total Veterans Population with a Disability: ACS 2013



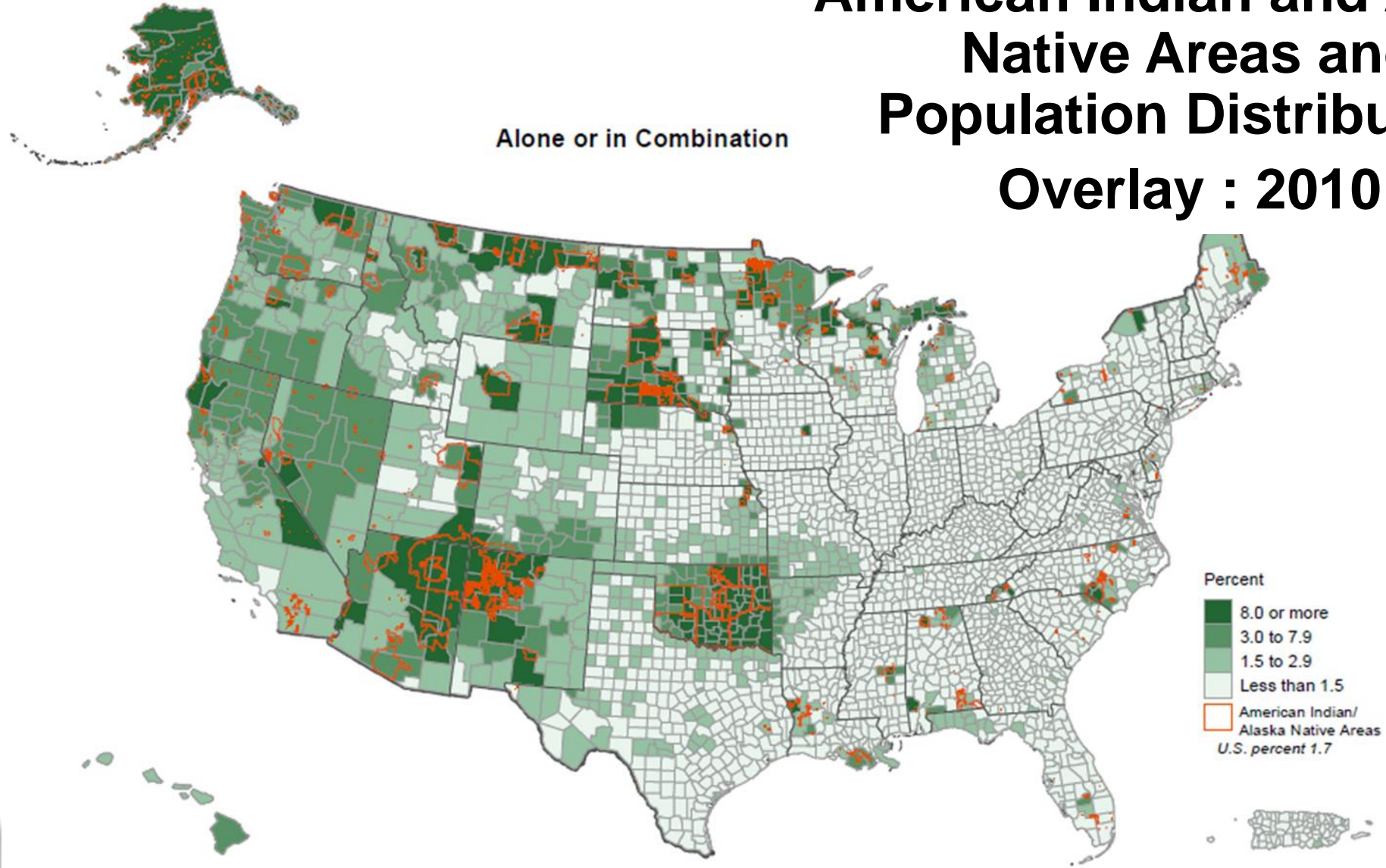
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Total Poverty Rates for People with Disabilities: ACS 2013



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American Indian and Alaska Native Areas and Population Distribution Overlay : 2010



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Learn about Indian Country

National Congress of American Indians

"Tribal Nations and the United States: An Introduction"

A basic overview of the history and underlying principles of tribal governance. The guide also provides introductory information about tribal governments and American Indian and Alaska Native people today.

http://www.ncai.org/resources/ncai_publications/tribal-nations-and-the-united-states-an-introduction



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Barriers to Service Access

American Indians/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Elders and People with Disabilities face many more barriers than other demographic groups:

- **Geographic Isolation**
- **Inadequate Housing**
- **Access to Sanitation and Utilities**
- **Durable Medical Equipment**
- **Accessible Transportation**
- **Personal Care**
- **Poverty**
- **Inherent Mistrust of Outsiders**



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Barriers to Access - continued

- **Geographic Isolation**

Reservations are areas that have been set aside for tribes through treaties, statues, or executive order. Within these territories, tribes have primary governmental authority. Tribes also have primary authority over land trusts, land held in trust by the federal government for a tribe. Land trusts may exist within reservations or off-reservation. Statistical areas are used by the Census Bureau to present data on recognized tribes that do not have a reservation (U.S. Census Bureau,

“American Indian and Alaska Native Areas,” Chapter 5 in Geographic Areas Reference Manual (Washington, DC: November 1994),

<http://www.census.gov/geo/reference/pdfs/GARM/Ch5GARM.pdf>).

U.S. Census, Map: American Indians and Alaska Natives in the United States (2010),

http://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/special/AIANWall2010/AIAN_US_2010.pdf.



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Barriers to Access - continued

Communities with high rates of poverty and/or lower education levels have historically faced problems enrolling in federal programs. As identified in research and other federal reports, these factors include:

- complexity of enrolling in financial assistance programs.**
- lack of awareness of these programs**
- transportation barriers (many reservations, for example, lack any form of public transportation, which creates a particular challenge for many elderly American Indians and Alaska Natives who are without cars or are unable to drive them)**



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Barriers to Access - continued

- **language (many American Indian and Alaska Natives languages are spoken only, limiting the use of written outreach materials); and low literacy and cultural barriers.**
- **poverty (high rates of poverty are a significant barrier to obtaining durable medical equipment like wheelchairs. It also inhibits access to dependable personal care.)**
- **lack of access to running water, propane, and accessible housing (this creates an unsafe and unsanitary environment leading to an increase in health problems and exposure to disease.)**



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Interpersonal Communication – Best Practices

- **Respect for other World Views**
- **Fact vs Myth**
 - **Leave media and popular culture images at home**
- **Patience and Tenacity**
 - **Keep going back**
- **Listen without Interruption**
 - **Give repeated opportunities to vent frustrations**
- **Show Respect**
 - **Accept their decisions**



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Effective Outreach Methods to Tribal Communities

- **Tribal Social Services Offices**
 - **Tribal TANF, LiHEAP, WIC, Veterans, Elders, Tribal VR**
- **Tribal Community Social Events**
 - **Ask permission**
 - **Engage a tribal partner (tribal social auxiliaries)**
- **Popular Community Locations**
 - **Walmart, groceries, Post Offices, Tribal HQs**
- **Tribal Media**
 - **News outlets, radio, social media**



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Tribal Community Outreach Resources

- **Regional Tribal Associations**
 - <http://www.ncai.org/tribal-directory/tribal-organizations>
- **CANAR (Consortia of Administrators of Native American Rehabilitation)**
<http://www.canar.org>

Development of substantive community partnerships can be essential, Tribal Community partners, like CANAR, could be the vital link between social service providers and vulnerable members of AI/AN tribes.



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CANAR as Your Outreach Partner

CANAR is the ONLY National Tribal Organization representing the needs of American Indians/Alaska Natives with Disabilities

CANAR members are Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation programs across Indian Country.

This network brings to Social Service providers the most comprehensive network of tribal disability experts from which to connect outreach efforts.



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