

# Native Athletes In Action: A Journey Towards Empowerment and Representation on the Playing Field

Native Athletes In Action (NAIA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering Native American athletes and promoting their representation in sports. Founded in 2004 by Philip Gover, a former professional basketball player from the Lakota tribe, NAIA has made significant strides in providing resources, support, and mentorship to Native athletes at all levels.

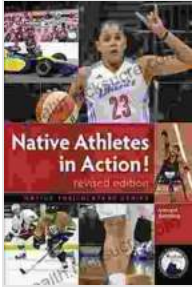
Native American athletes face unique challenges in pursuing their athletic dreams. These challenges include:

- **Lack of Representation:** Native Americans are severely underrepresented in professional sports. According to the Sports Institute, Native Americans make up only 0.6% of Division I college athletes and 0.06% of professional athletes.
- **Distance and Accessibility:** Many Native Americans live in remote areas, making it difficult for them to access training facilities, coaching, and tournaments.
- **Poverty and Socioeconomic Disadvantage:** Native American communities often face high rates of poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage, which can limit opportunities for athletic participation.

NAIA's mission is to:

**Native Athletes in Action!: Revised Edition** by Vincent Schilling

★★★★★ 4.6 out of 5



Language	: English
File size	: 7022 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 122 pages
Lending	: Enabled



- Empower Native Youth: Provide resources and support to Native athletes to help them reach their full potential on and off the field.
- Promote Representation: Increase the visibility of Native American athletes in sports and inspire future generations.
- Foster Leadership: Develop leadership skills in Native athletes and empower them to make a difference in their communities.

NAIA offers a range of programs and initiatives to achieve its mission:

- Youth Development: NAIA provides funding, equipment, and mentorship to youth teams and leagues in Native American communities.
- College and Professional Support: NAIA offers scholarships, academic support, and career guidance to Native athletes pursuing college and professional careers in sports.
- Mentorship and Role Modeling: NAIA connects Native athletes with successful role models who can provide guidance, motivation, and support.

NAIA has played a pivotal role in the success of numerous Native American athletes, including:

- **Waneek Horn-Miller:** A former professional basketball player who represented the U.S. at the 2012 Olympics.
- **Roy Rana:** A former professional football player who was a member of the Oakland Raiders.
- **Ray Holmgren:** A current professional lacrosse player for the San Diego Seals.

These athletes have not only achieved success on the field but have also become advocates for Native American representation and empowerment.

NAIA's impact on Native American athletes has been profound:

- **Increased Representation:** The organization has played a significant role in increasing the visibility and representation of Native athletes in sports.
- **Improved Opportunities:** NAIA has provided resources and support that have helped Native athletes overcome barriers and pursue their athletic dreams.
- **Community Engagement:** NAIA's programs have fostered a sense of community and pride among Native athletes and their families.

NAIA continues to set ambitious goals for the future:

- **Expand Youth Outreach:** Reach more Native American youth in remote and underserved communities.

- Increase College Representation: Double the number of Native American athletes participating in college sports.
- Develop a Professional Pathway: Create a pipeline for Native athletes to reach the highest levels of professional sports.

Native Athletes In Action is an organization that is making a real difference in the lives of Native American athletes. By providing resources, support, and mentorship, NAIA is empowering Native athletes to overcome challenges, reach their full potential, and inspire future generations. As the organization continues to grow and expand its reach, it is poised to make an even greater impact on the representation and empowerment of Native Americans in sports.

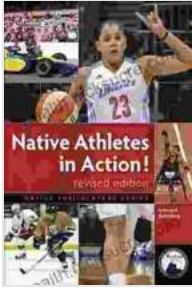
### Alt Attribute for Images

- **Philip Gover, founder of Native Athletes In Action:** Inspiring Native American youth through sports.
- **Native American youth playing basketball:** Empowering young athletes to reach their full potential.
- **Group of Native American athletes:** Overcoming barriers and achieving success on the field.
- **Native athlete receiving scholarship:** Breaking down socioeconomic barriers to athletic participation.
- **Native role model mentoring youth:** Fostering leadership and community engagement.

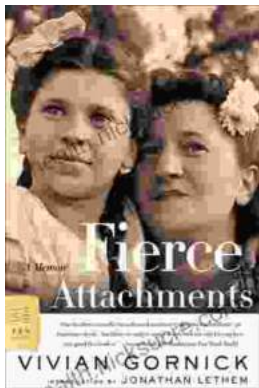
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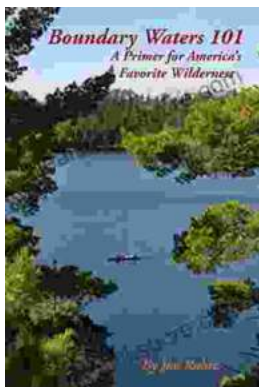


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